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Edited by Sir John Hammerton

SIXPENCE JANUARY 8, 1943

AXIS SHIPS IN BENGHAZI HARBOUR were still blazing as the result of the non-stop attack by Allied bombers on Rommel's chief Libyan port when the 8th Army entered the town on November 20, 1942. Two Indian soldiers in the foreground are enjoying the interlude in the hurricane of war. Immediately after our recapture of Benghazi the harbour was speedily cleared up, and by mid-December was again in working order.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

NO. 146 WILL BE PUBLISHED FRIDAY, JANUARY 22

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

THE retreat of Rommel from El Agheila on Dec. 13,1942, and the capture of Buna the next day, were highly satisfactory events. It would have been more satisfactory if Rommel had given Montgomery an opportunity of gaining a decisive victory, but his retreat from such a strong position affords convincing proof that his losses at El Alamein were not exaggerated. It is also an indication of the inability of the Axis Powers to reinforce him owing to the number and serious nature of their other commitments. The recognized strategy for armies compelled to act on exterior lines is to maintain relentless pressure at a number of points in order to prevent the enemy concentrating his forces where he is most threatened, or has opportunities for a counter-stroke. This strategy is now in operation, and its effect in causing the enemy to disperse his resources and in counteracting the inherent advantages he possesses of rapid movement on interior lines can be seen.

The comparatively small size of the forces engaged in New Guinea should not make us underrate the importance of the achievements or the difficulties that were overcome. The passage of the Owen Stanley range, and the attacks on Buna itself under appalling conditions, have shown once again the adaptability of Australian troops to all sorts of warfare and their fighting qualities. The desperate fight made by the Japanese adds to the brilliance of the achievement.

In Russia and in Tunisia the situation continues to develop favourably, although it is yet too soon to indulge in expectation of immediate sensational results.

'MARBLE ARCH,' a pretentious Italian monument marking the half-way line between Tripoli and Egypt, stands near what was the Axis forward fighter base before Rommel retreated from El Agheila. *Photo, Daily Mail*

NORTH AFRICA

Information as regards operations in Tunisia has been so meagre that at the time of writing (in the middle of December) the situation is somewhat obscure, especially in the southern regions. On the whole, it seems fairly satisfactory, especially since there are indications that in the struggle for air supremacy the Allies are by degrees depriving the enemy of his initial advantages. So long, however, as he can operate short-range aircraft from the airfields of Tunis and Bizerta decisive supremacy over the battlefield is not likely to be achieved. The Allied advanced forces have had to deal with a number of counter-attacks; and though they do not appear to have suffered any serious reverses, they have been compelled to withdraw from their most forward position and to shorten their line. They have, however, inflicted considerable losses on the enemy, and hold positions covering the deployment of the main army.

Weather has been unfavourable, and the movement of transport columns through the mountains has been difficult, and will probably be the main reason for delay in opening major operations. The enemy's strength is undoubtedly growing, though at the price of heavy losses on his lines of communication inflicted by the Navy and the Middle East air force.

The possibility that Rommel may abandon Tripolitania and attempt to join hands with the Axis forces in Tunis exists; but should he attempt to operate in Southern Tunis it is difficult to see how he could be adequately supplied. He would have no established bases to work from, and his sea and air communications would become increasingly precarious.

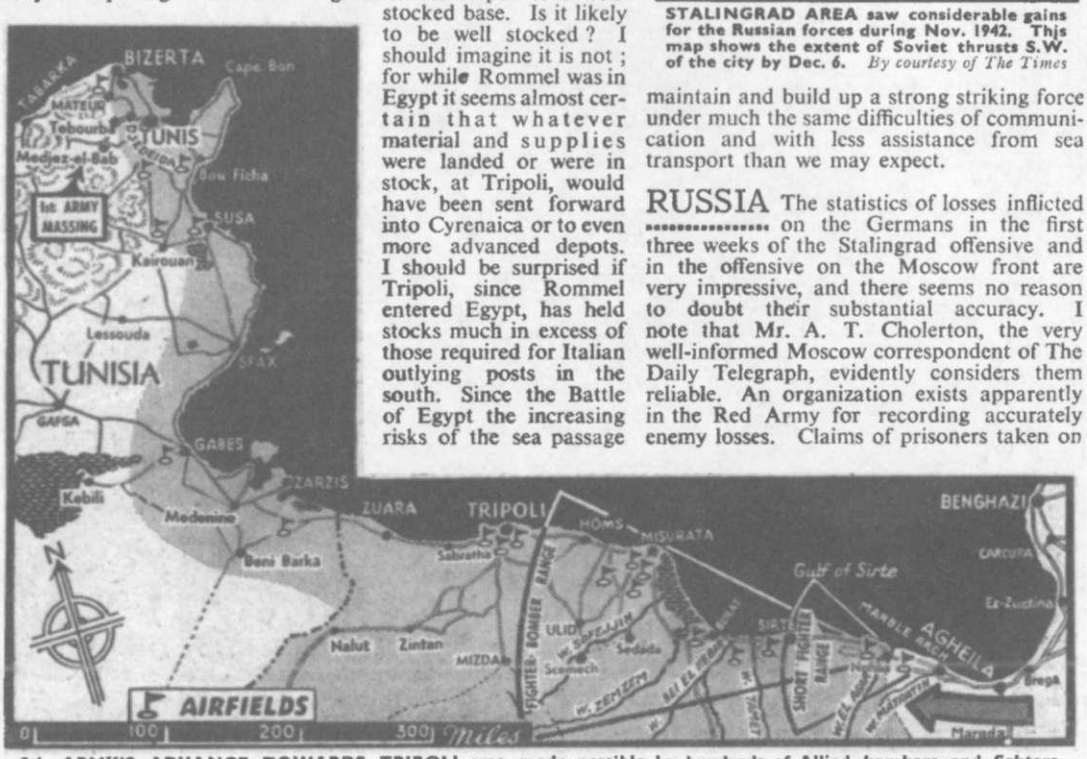
ROMMEL'S retreat from El Agheila without attempting serious resistance naturally raises the question: Why did he retreat so precipitately to that point if he did not intend to make full use of the defensive potentialities of the position? I think it is safe to assume that he hoped to receive there substantial reinforcements, and that his hopes were disappointed. It may be that he also hoped that Montgomery, flushed with success, would attack him with weak advanced forces, and without proper preparations—thus exposing himself to counter-attack. If that were so, Montgomery's deliberate procedure made the hope vain.

I DO not think that Rommel gained much time by his halt at El Agheila, since in any case the 8th Army was bound to pause to close up, to bring the port of Benghazi into operation, and in general to reorganize its lines of communications before embarking on a further advance of over 400 miles into Tripolitania. His halt and final retreat have done little more than reveal fully the weakness of the force Rommel now has at his disposal.

It is now generally assumed that Rommel will make a stand at Misurata. But would his prospects there be much better than they were at El Agheila, unless in the meantime reinforcements are poured into Tripoli? Misurata is a weaker position than that at El Agheila; and though its communications with Tripoli are shorter, that disadvantage would not be great unless Tripoli is a well-stocked base. Is it likely to be well stocked? I should imagine it is not; for while Rommel was in Egypt it seems almost certain that whatever material and supplies were landed or were in stock, at Tripoli, would have been sent forward into Cyrenaica or to even more advanced depots. I should be surprised if Tripoli, since Rommel entered Egypt, has held stocks much in excess of those required for Italian outlying posts in the south. Since the Battle of Egypt the increasing risks of the sea passage and the competing demands of Tunisia make it improbable that deficiences, if they existed, have been made good.

The chief advantage the Misurata position has is that the 8th Army would again be strung out in its advance, and that its line of communication would be long and difficult, with water supply a particularly difficult problem. Still, it must be remembered that, when we were in occupation of Cyrenaica, Rommel at El Agheila was able to maintain and build up a strong striking force under much the same difficulties of communication and with less assistance from sea transport than we may expect.

STALINGRAD AREA saw considerable gains for the Russian forces during Nov. 1942. This map shows the extent of Soviet thrusts S.W. of the city by Dec. 6. *By courtesy of The Times*

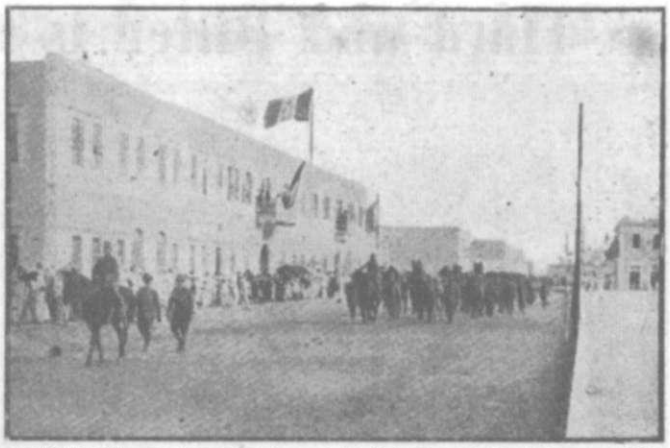


8th ARMY'S ADVANCE TOWARDS TRIPOLI was made possible by hundreds of Allied bombers and fighters which operated from Libyan bases S. of Benghazi. Enemy airfields which follow the Tripolitanian coastline were heavily strafed by our planes. The arrow shows the direction of our advance after the network of minefields had been crossed in the El Agheila region in mid-December 1942. *By courtesy of the Daily Mail*

RUSSIA

The statistics of losses inflicted on the Germans in the first three weeks of the Stalingrad offensive and in the offensive on the Moscow front are very impressive, and there seems no reason to doubt their substantial accuracy. I note that Mr. A. T. Cholerton, the very well-informed Moscow correspondent of The Daily Telegraph, evidently considers them reliable. An organization exists apparently in the Red Army for recording accurately enemy losses. Claims of prisoners taken on

GERMAN OFFICER, his Iron Cross prominently displayed, his head bowed and hands raised in token of submission, gives himself up to Allied troops in Tunisia.
Photo, Associated Press



MISURATA, on the coastal road to Tripoli and situated some 303 miles N.W. of El Agheila, has a population of about 45,000. By Dec. 17, 1942 the fleeing Afrika Korps was nearing the town. This photo shows Italian troops in the main street. *Photo, E.N.A.*

the Moscow front are very moderate, nor have additions to the numbers taken in the first break-through on the Stalingrad front, when mass surrenders took place, been large. With the Russians steadily gaining ground the numbers of killed should also easily be ascertainable, and Mr. Cholerton states that no estimates are made of the considerable numbers of killed behind the German front. In the heavy fighting in those parts of the front where attack and counter-attack are constantly being delivered without much gain of ground, the mortality rate on both sides must be very high, and the process of attrition rapid; but the Russians for a number of reasons would seem more likely to stand the strain on their morale. The Germans in general are better placed as regards railway communications; but where, as at Stalingrad and Rzhev, railways have been lost, the strain on the Luftwaffe transport service is clearly becoming great, and the destruction of transport aircraft a very serious matter, made all the more serious by the diversion of transport planes to the Mediterranean.

On the Stalingrad front, though Russian progress has been slowed down, the situation for the Germans shows no sign of improvement. There are few indications that they have mustered a relief army sufficiently strong to break through the Russian ring. Though a fairly powerful force appears to be forming at Kotelnikovo, its main object at present is probably to check a further Russian advance towards that important centre: Kotelnikovo would evidently provide an advanced base for any attempt made from the south to re-establish communication with the encircled army.

IF relief operations are undertaken, they will most probably be from the south, with the Novorossisk-Kotelnikovo-Stalingrad railway as their axis. The Russians on that side, lacking good communications and not easily reinforced, can hardly be in great strength. Moreover, the obstacle of the Don would be avoided. Relief operations by the railway on the north bank of the Don are less likely, for in addition to having to force the passage of the Don they would be exposed to a flank attack by powerful Russian forces from the north. Furthermore, the Germans are anxious about a threatened Russian offensive south of Voronezh, and are probably holding reserves in readiness to meet it should it be launched. The whole situation on the Stalingrad front is made the more obscure because it is never made clear whether German counter-attacks reported have been made from outside the ring or by troops within it.

STRIPPED FOR ACTION, this New Zealand machine-gunner opens fire at a Stuka during the Libyan fighting. The snake-like ammunition belt moves at great speed through the gun. *Photo, Associated Press*

TRIPOLI, capital of Tripolitania, has for the past two years been the chief port through which Axis forces in N. Africa have drawn their supplies. Allied air attacks were concentrated on the docks and military buildings. Tripoli's population of about 110,000 is equally divided between Italians and Arabs. Here is an aerial view of the city. On the right, jutting into the harbour, is the old Castle. *Photo, Keystone*

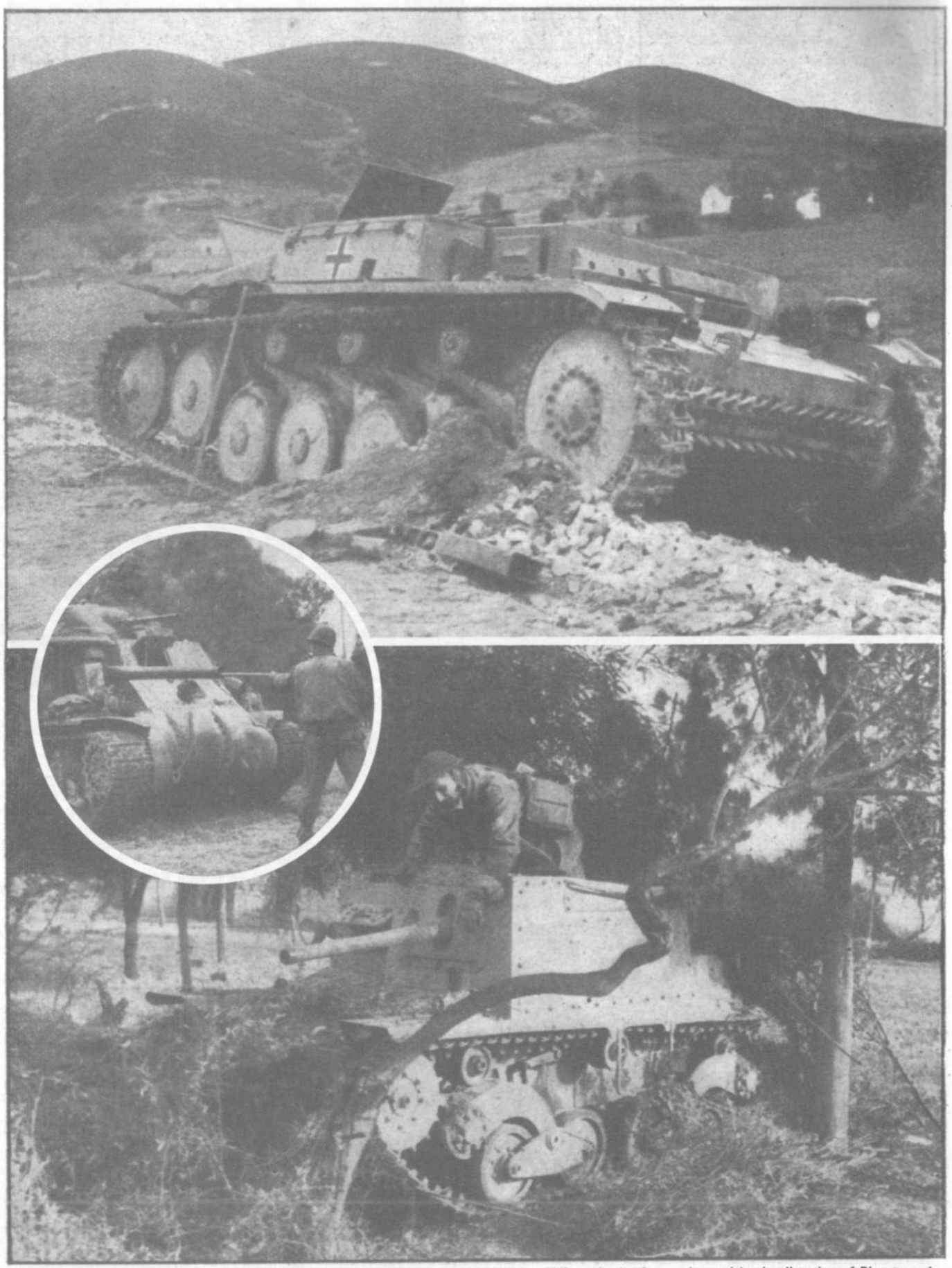
On the Moscow front the fierceness and frequency of German counter-attacks show the enemy's determination to hold on to positions threatened with isolation, and to avoid at all costs a withdrawal to straighten his front—a determination based no doubt on the recollection of just how disastrous the withdrawals made last winter really were.

FAR EAST The taking of Buna points to the elimination of the Japanese foothold in Papua, but it also reveals the fanatical courage Japanese troops can display. If the same spirit prevails throughout the Japanese army, the prospects of a quick recovery of our lost territory would be poor indeed.

But the Japanese have been known to crack, and there is reason to believe that the garrison of Buna was a picked force. It must be realized, too, that the attacking troops were desperately handicapped by ground and weather conditions, and were unable to develop superiority in armament.

In the Solomons the situation seems to be satisfactory, especially in the air; and the Japanese have lost more ships in fruitless manoeuvres. Papua, New Britain, and the Solomons have a heavy rainfall at all seasons, but November to April (summer in those latitudes) is the wet season; and extensive operations will presumably be postponed till the drier conditions may be expected.

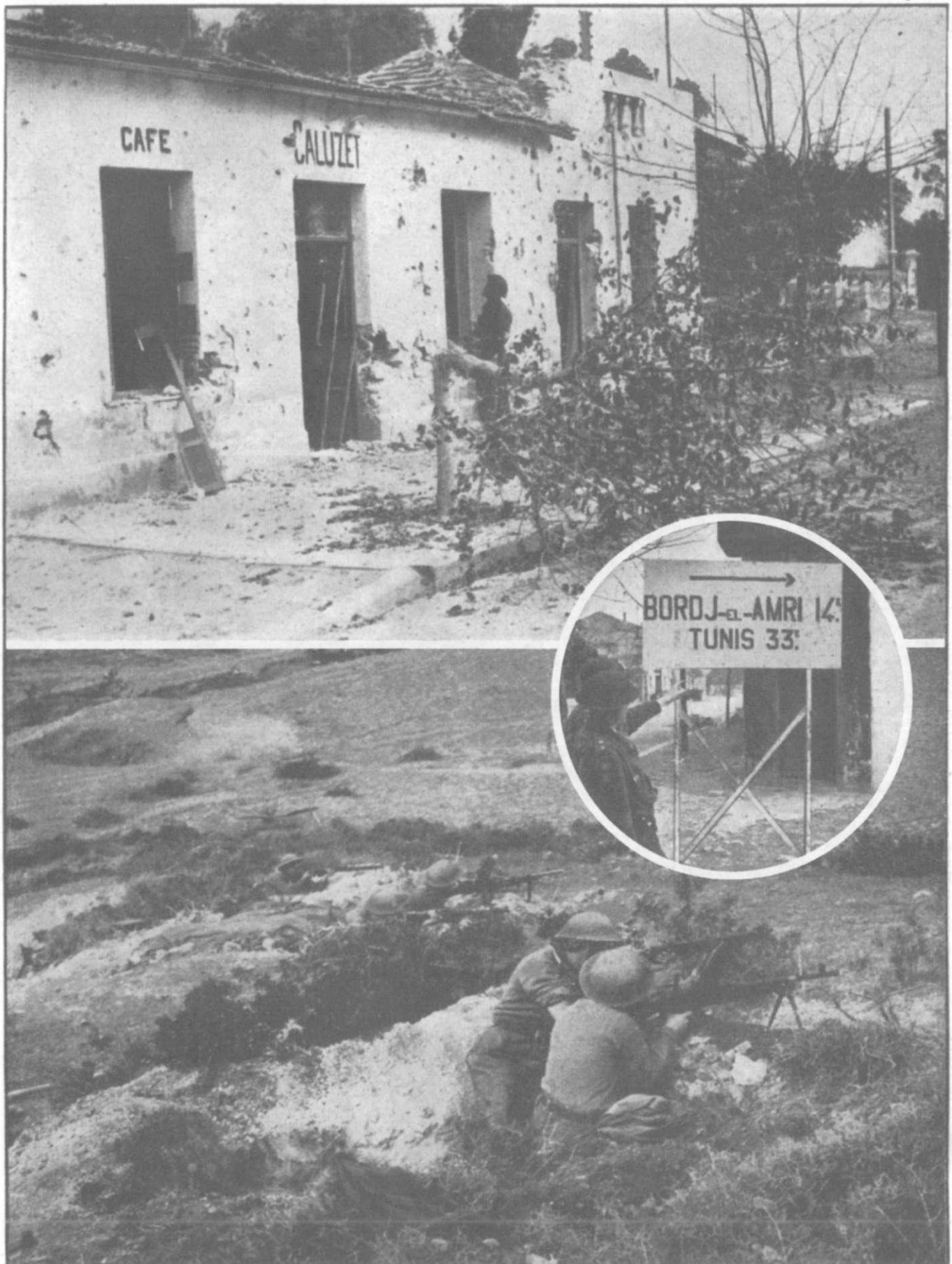
Hard and Bitter Is the Battle for Tunisia



FIERCE FIGHTING IN NORTHERN TUNISIA developed towards the end of Nov. 1942 as the 1st Army advanced in the direction of Bizerta and Tunis. Top, knocked-out German tank at Mateur, key-point S.W. of Bizerta. Circle, the gun of a U.S. General Lee tank receives a pull-through after taking a prominent part in the capture of Medjez-el-Bab. Bottom, Italian tank taken in the course of the fierce fighting near Tebourba being examined by a British soldier.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

No 'Picnic' for the Men of Anderson's Army



IN THE FIGHT FOR TEBOURBA, some twenty miles W. of Tunis, a battalion of the Hampshire Regiment covered themselves with glory. For four days they held up a largely superior German force in the most advanced of the First Army's positions in a wood beside the Jedeida-Tebourba road, but after charging the enemy time and again and defeating many a counter-attack, they were at length compelled to withdraw on Dec. 3, 1942 from their foothold in Tebourba's outskirts. Top, bomb damage in Tebourba ; circle, British officers in the vicinity; below, 1st Army Bren gunners in the line near Mateur.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

'Blood Banks' Save Lives for the 8th Army

BADLY WOUNDED MAN (left) at a Casualty Clearing Station. To enable him to withstand an operation, a blood transfusion is ordered. Above, a dispatch-rider sets out for the "blood bank."

Into the dispatch-rider's pack a medical orderly attached to a "blood bank" places a bottle of blood of the correct group. With this the rider returns at speed to the C.C.S.

IN LIBYA "blood banks" are proving an invaluable adjunct to the medical officers accompanying the 8th Army. They are established in the fighting areas to supply dressing stations and mobile operating theatres. Blood transfusion has been the means of saving the lives of many men who, owing to loss of blood, would not have had the strength to undergo surgical treatment. Above, a major operation is in progress in one of the desert theatres. Left, patients convalescing in the ward of a tent hospital in the desert. This hospital is operated by a New Zealand unit.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Associated Press

Montgomery Drives On Along the Road to Tripoli

SIDI BARRANI, abandoned by Rommel's fleeing troops by Nov. 11, 1942, was a mass of ruins when the 8th Army entered the town. Left, the wall of a shattered building provides an appropriate setting for humorous slogans. Above, a British anti-tank gunner in Barce armed with a welcome assortment of bread-rolls.

SMASHING AT ROMMEL IN THE WESTERN DESERT, a 4·5-gun of an R.A. Field and Medium Battery is seen in action. This gun, one of the latest developments of our field artillery, has been used with deadly effect in forward areas; and has caused great damage to tanks and transport in the enemy's rear positions. The 4·5 has concertina-like compensators which assist in absorbing recoil, and has proved a formidable counterblast to the German 88-mm. gun.

Photos, British Official; Crown Copyright; Sport & General

THE WAR AT SEA

by Francis E. McMurtrie

PUBLICATION of air photographs of the naval dockyard at Toulon, taken the day after the French fleet was scuttled, has provided the first actual evidence of its state. Some of the ships were still on fire, and others were obviously semi-submerged. Of the two modern battleships, the Strasbourg was lying alongside a pier, apparently aground, while her sister-ship, the Dunkerque, could be seen in dry dock, where she had evidently been placed to enable the under-water damage inflicted by torpedoes at Oran in July 1940 to be repaired.

Though some vessels appeared in the photograph to be intact, it is impossible to be certain that there is no under-water damage. Personally, I am of the opinion that there are very few vessels of any fighting value at Toulon that could proceed to sea without more or less extensive refitting.

In answer to an inquiry from an American correspondent, Admiral Darlan has declared very definitely that he hopes all available French warships will now be employed in operations against the Axis Powers. In this hope he categorically included not only ships at Dakar, Casablanca, Oran and Algiers, but also those immobilized at Alexandria, under an agreement made in July, 1940 between Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham and Vice-Admiral Godefroy.

THOUGH they have been laid up in a demilitarized condition, in charge of nucleus crews, ever since, these ships are believed to be in good condition, though probably their machinery would require some overhauling after the long period during which it has been idle. The ships comprise the old battleship Lorraine, the cruisers Suffren, Duquesne, Tourville and Duguay-Trouin, the destroyers Basque, Forbin, and Le Fortuné, and the submarine Protée.

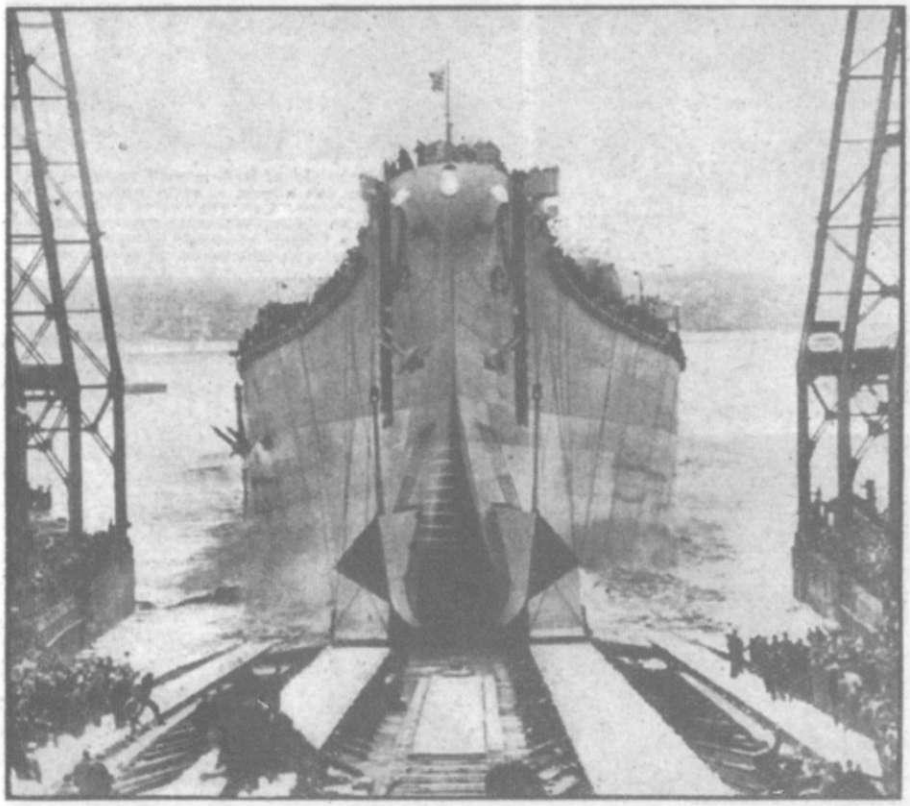
At Casablanca are the half-completed battleship Jean Bart, the cruiser Primauguet, one or two destroyers and possibly some submarines, all more or less damaged. It would be necessary to patch up the Jean Bart and Primauguet to enable them to be taken to a fully equipped dockyard in this country or the United States for complete refit before they would be of the slightest use for fighting purposes.

There are several destroyers at Oran and Algiers, aground or in a semi-wrecked state, together with some smaller craft of little importance, and the submarines Le Glorieux, Casabianca and Marsouin, which escaped from Toulon and are in sound condition.

At Dakar are the cruisers Georges Leygues, Gloire and Montcalm, with at least three destroyers and some submarines, all presumably in a seaworthy state, as well as the disabled battleship Richelieu, which, like her sister-ship Jean Bart, would require to be taken to a dockyard for extensive repair before she could be regarded as serviceable.

Leaving out of account the disabled units, there would be available for operations in the near future seven cruisers (assuming the Alexandria ships can be counted), one or perhaps two flotillas of destroyers, and a flotilla of submarines. For escort purposes the cruisers and destroyers would be most valuable; and there is no reason why the submarines should not engage in harrying enemy communications between Italy and Tunisia, as British and Greek submarines have done so successfully in the past.

There is, of course, the question of manning these ships, since it is not certain whether full crews of trained Frenchmen could be found for them all. Of the desire of the majority to avenge the indignities inflicted on their country by the Germans there is little doubt; and there is every reason to suppose that they would be equally ready to fight the Italians, whom they heartily despise.



WORLD'S BIGGEST BATTLESHIP, U.S.S. New Jersey, one of 10 new ships launched in American east coast yards on Dec. 7, 1942, the first anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbour. Belonging to the Iowa class, she will displace 52,000 tons, full load, her length is 880 ft., and her main battery will consist of nine 16-in. guns. *Photo, Keystone*

IN the race to replace lost aircraft-carriers the United States is making rapid strides, and is likely soon to outdistance Japan. Of those with which they started the war, neither combatant has more than three first-line units remaining in service. There are a number of auxiliary aircraft-carriers in the U.S. Navy of the Long Island and Charger types, but these are not suitable for operating with a fleet. Similarly the Japanese are rumoured to have improvised some make-shift carriers, to which the same remark would apply.

During the second half of 1942 there have been launched from American shipyards three new aircraft-carriers of 25,000 tons, the Essex, Lexington and Bunker Hill, and three of 10,000 tons, the Independence, Princeton and Belleau Wood. The latter trio were laid down as cruisers, but were altered during construction and should not take so long to complete as the bigger ships. When all six are in service some time in 1943, they should accelerate the pace of the war in the Pacific.

Ten more aircraft-carriers of the 25,000-ton type and possibly as many of the 10,000-ton class are under construction, and some of these should also be delivered during 1943. In the vast Pacific, with its immense distances, a preponderance in first-line carriers should give the United States a tremendous advantage, which should hasten Japan's defeat.

Even as it is, American torpedo aircraft and dive-bombers from the airfield at Guadalcanal continue to inflict loss and damage on the Japanese Navy. A comparison of casualties over many months reveals clearly that in the air the Americans have decidedly the upper hand. This must have seriously depleted the number of trained Japanese airmen, so that as time goes on the situation in this respect should still further improve.

THERE was a smart little action in the Channel on the night of December 11-12, 1942 not far from Dieppe. Light naval forces—an expression comprising anything up to a destroyer—under the command of Lieut.-Commander A. A. F. Talbot, R.N., intercepted a westbound enemy convoy of two medium-sized supply vessels with four escorting ships. One of the supply vessels and at least one if not two of the escorts were sunk. Our casualties were light, and only minor damage was done to our ships.

There is nothing novel in this type of encounter, which has been occurring at intervals for many months past. What it does show is that, despite the risk involved, the enemy still find it worth while to try to relieve the burden on their overtaxed land transport by sending supplies by sea.

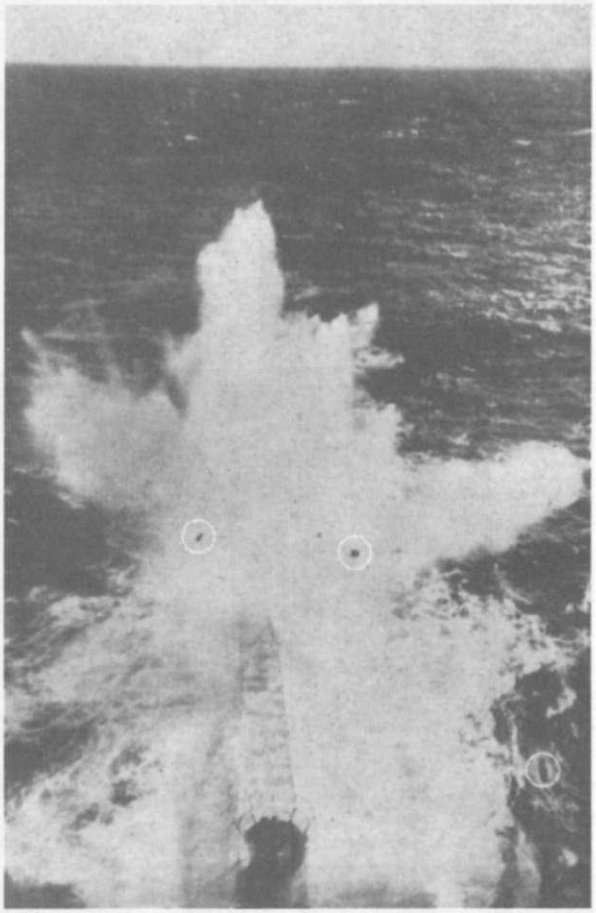
British submarines continue to take heavy toll of enemy supply lines to North Africa. Admiralty communiqués have detailed various exploits, such as the sinking of an armed merchant cruiser, a tanker and sundry supply ships. On one occasion an Italian railway-train was shelled and half-wrecked; on another, lighters trying to land supplies for Rommel's retreating forces were sunk inshore. A submarine of the Royal Hellenic Navy participated in one of these exploits.

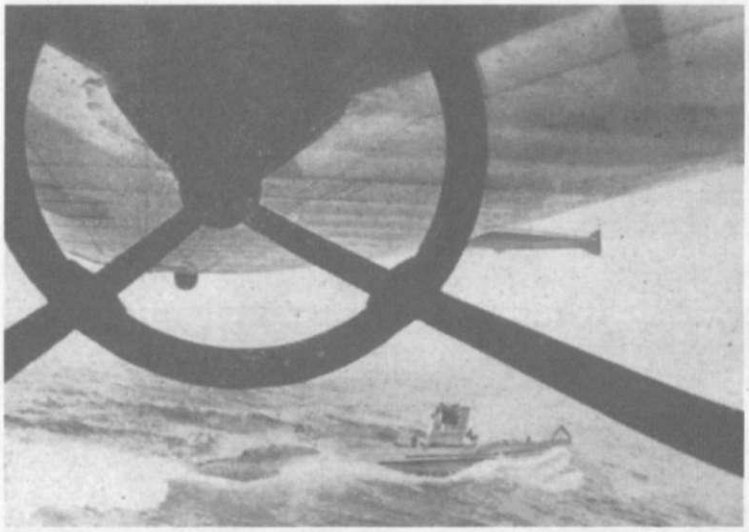
There are no braver or more determined men in the Royal Navy than the personnel of the submarine service. A conspicuous example was afforded by H.M.S. Truant, which recently returned to this country after an absence of 2½ years. During this time she covered more than 80,000 miles in the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, and Java Sea, and was responsible for sinking or damaging over 20 enemy vessels. She went to the United States in May 1941 for a refit, but was soon back on patrol against Italian supply lines. In the Far East the Japanese claimed to have sunk her, but she escaped.

Life or Death Struggle in the Submarine War

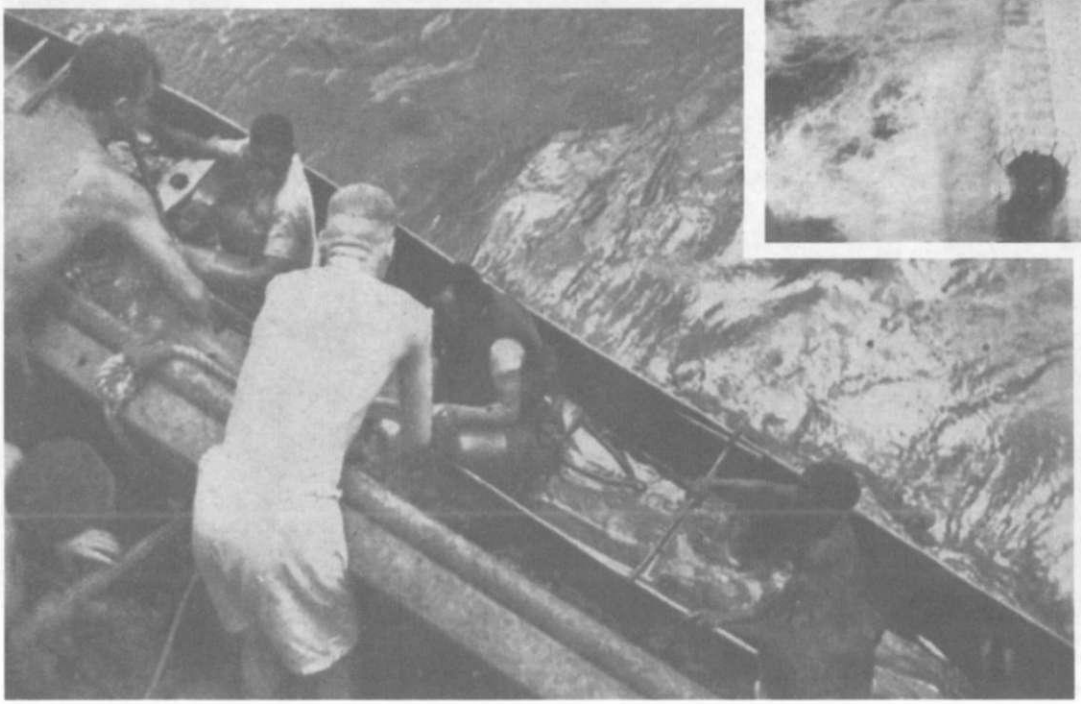
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN recently, British submarines have taken heavy toll of Axis supplies en route for Tunisia and Tripoli. On the left a submarine crew is seen coming ashore at Alexandria. Complete with kit, these men have just disembarked for well-earned leave. Their vessel entered the harbour with the "Jolly Roger" fluttering from her flagstaff as a sign that she had sent an Axis ship to the bottom.

Below, the end of a U-boat. Brought to the surface by depth charges and then bombed by a Coastal Command Liberator operating from Iceland, this submarine received a direct hit. Fragments of metal thrown up are ringed with white. Periscope standards, jumping wires and deck are clearly visible.





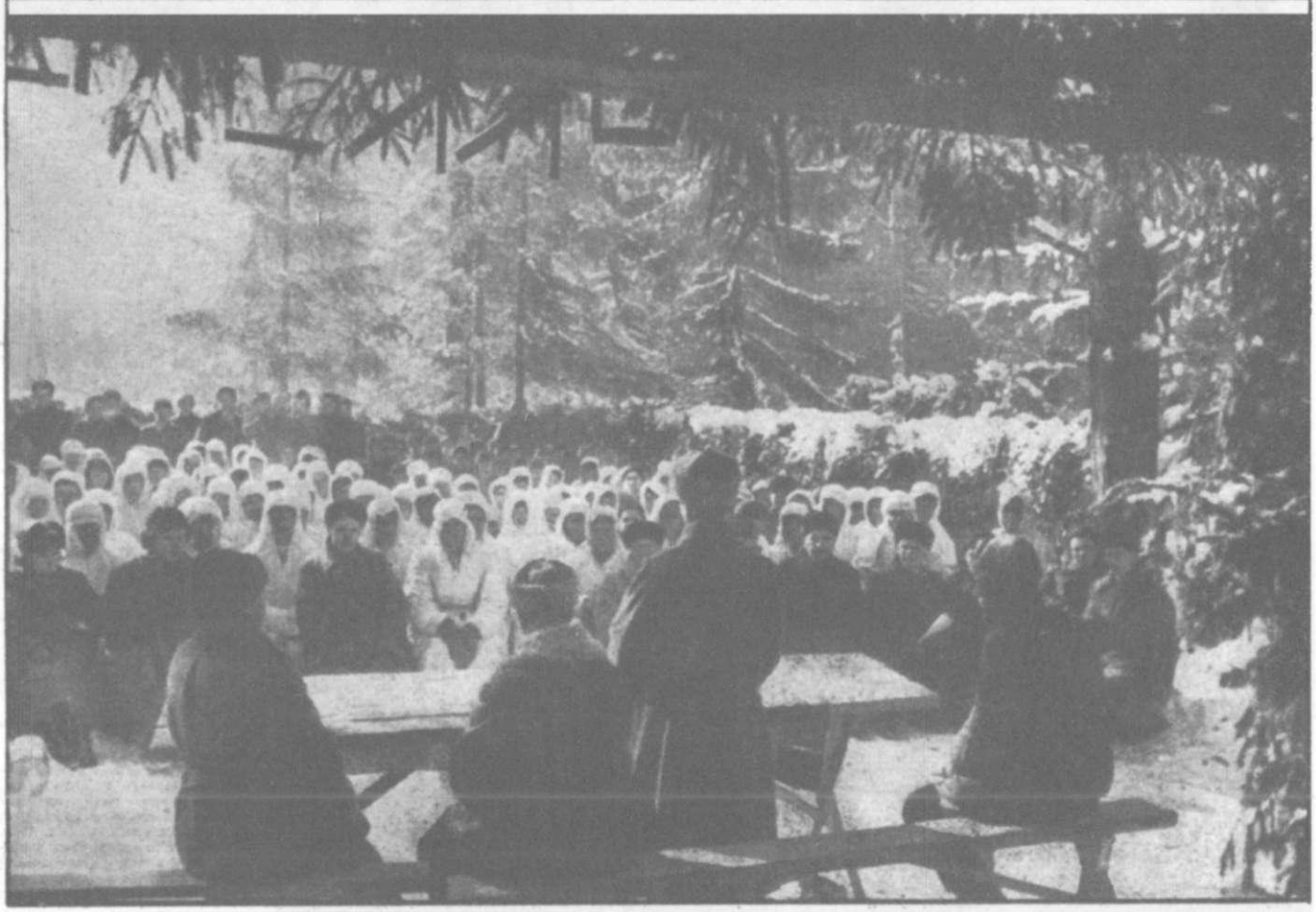
IN MID-ATLANTIC a German long-distance aircraft of the Condor type hovers over a U-boat lying in wait for Allied convoys. During the closing months of 1942 the Battle of the Atlantic swung heavily in our favour.



BRITISH SEAMEN who spent 12 days in open boats ran ashore on a desolate part of the African coast. They were found by natives and given hospitality. Meanwhile, they traced an S O S in the sand, and their signal was spotted by a British reconnaissance aircraft which reported to the nearest naval base. A trawler was then sent out, the castaways were transferred from shore to ship in native canoes, and subsequently returned to Britain to man another vessel. Left, British sailors, in scanty tropical kit, help one of the exhausted survivors to reach the rescuing trawler's deck.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Associated Press

Deep Snow Covers the Russian Battlefront



IN THE DEPTHS OF WINTER the Red Army has launched a series of powerful offensives—in the central sector, at Stalingrad, and on the Middle Don. The top photograph shows Soviet light artillerymen transporting their guns along a frozen road ; ammunition is hauled on sledges. **Below**, a detachment of sappers serving with a Russian Guards regiment listens intently to a lecture on recent offensive operations given by their commanding officer at a camp on the northern front.

Photos, Planet News

Through the Wintry Forest Speed the Red Guards

CLEARING A WOOD IN THE CAUCASUS. Having knocked out a German tank, a detachment of Russian Guards dash forward past the blazing machine to attack the enemy in the middle of this snow-covered wood on the Caucasian front. It was a Guards division which, under Gen. Alexander Rodimtsev, won undying glory in the defence of Stalingrad. German attempts to advance north-east of Tuapse failed in the face of strong Soviet opposition during mid-December 1942.

Photo, Planet News

Why the Solomons Battle Is So Important

Five hundred miles to the east of New Guinea lie the Solomons, a group of islands which since last summer have been a battleground for Americans and Japanese. As the following account makes clear, what is at stake is not just the ownership of a South Seas paradise, but a position of immense strategical importance.

WHEN the Spanish navigator Alvaro Mendaña first set foot on them in 1567 he thought that he had discovered the source of King Solomon's treasure; apparently he mistook the iron pyrites visible in the outcropping rocks for traces of gold. It was not gold; and from whatever quarter the fabulously wealthy Hebrew monarch may have derived his riches, it was certainly not from this far-distant and inaccessible corner of the earth. But the name that Mendaña bestowed in his hour of ignorance stuck: *Islas de Salomon* he called them, and the Solomon Islands they are to this day.

When the Spaniard sailed away the very existence of the archipelago was practically forgotten; in Madrid they hushed up the details of Mendaña's narrative so as to discourage aliens from following in his footsteps and securing the wealth for themselves—that wealth which must be Spain's or nobody's. Just two hundred years passed before the Solomons were discovered afresh, by the Englishman, Philip Carteret, and the Frenchman, Louis de Bougainville (after whom one of the islands is named, as well as the tropical plant). In 1769 another Frenchman, de Surville, made a lengthy stay in the archipelago, and gave to a number of the islands the names they still bear. New Georgia was named by Lieut. Shortland in 1788. So the tale continues. But then for many years the peaceful record of discovery was followed by one of bloodshed and rapine. The natives were no carefree children of Nature, but fierce cannibals, and their manners were not improved by contact with traders, whalers and ruffianly "blackbirders" who derived their livelihood from kidnapping natives for labour on the plantations of Fiji and Queensland. The white man, bringing with him depopulation and disease, earned the black man's hatred; and it is hardly surprising that generations passed away before the missionaries could establish themselves here and there in the group. As recently as 1927 missionaries were killed in the Solomons.

Politically, all the archipelago is British; Guadalcanal, Malaita, San Cristobal, New Georgia, Choiseul, Isabel, Tulagi and some smaller islands were annexed in 1893 when the British were busily engaged in painting red any vacant places on the map, while Bougainville and Buka, German from 1893 to their occupation by an Australian force in 1914, were assigned to Australia by the League of Nations as a mandated territory in 1920. The area of the British Solomons protectorate is about 15,000 square miles, with a population of about 500 whites and 100,000 Melanesians; in the Australian (mandated) portion there is a native population of about 50,000 in an area of 4,100 square miles. Bananas, coconuts, rubber, sweet potatoes, and pineapples are grown.

The Resident Commissioner of the Protectorate has his seat in Tulagi, a little island off the coast of Florida—the Solomons' Florida, of course; Kieta in Bougainville is the chief town of the mandated islands. One of the most important of the islands is Guadalcanal or Guadalcanar, as it is also spelled. About the size of Devonshire, it is, like most of its fellows in the archipelago, volcanic, rugged, and mountainous.

GUADALCANAL (inset), key-island of the Solomons, saw the destruction of many Japanese planes and ships during Sept.-Dec. 1942, when Allied air and sea power took a heavy toll of Jap reinforcements. This map shows Guadalcanal in relation to enemy-occupied islands in the S.W. Pacific. *By courtesy of Reynolds News*

GUADALCANAL lies near the limit of Japan's expansion to the south-east. To the north and west her conquests have been widespread since the collapse of Allied resistance in the Netherlands Indies at the end of February 1942. On a number of the myriads of islands and islets that dot this vast area of the Pacific her troops have effected landings, even if they have not found it worth their while to make a prolonged stay. Some have been visited merely by a Japanese launch containing a mission of a handful of army officers and a civilian or two who, after informing the headman of the native settlement of the quota of foodstuffs that he will be expected to provide in future for the Japanese overlords, have quietly withdrawn. Other of the islands, however, have a Japanese garrison. These include New Britain and New Ireland, lying off the north-east coast of New Guinea, and the most northerly of the Solomons—Buka, Bougainville, Shortland, Fais, Gizo, and Florida. Then in the monster island of New Guinea, while the Allies hold Papua and the Gona and Buna area of the mandated north-eastern region, the Japanese hold most of the island's northern coast from Salamaua westward, and they have also established their positions in the Dutch south-western portion.

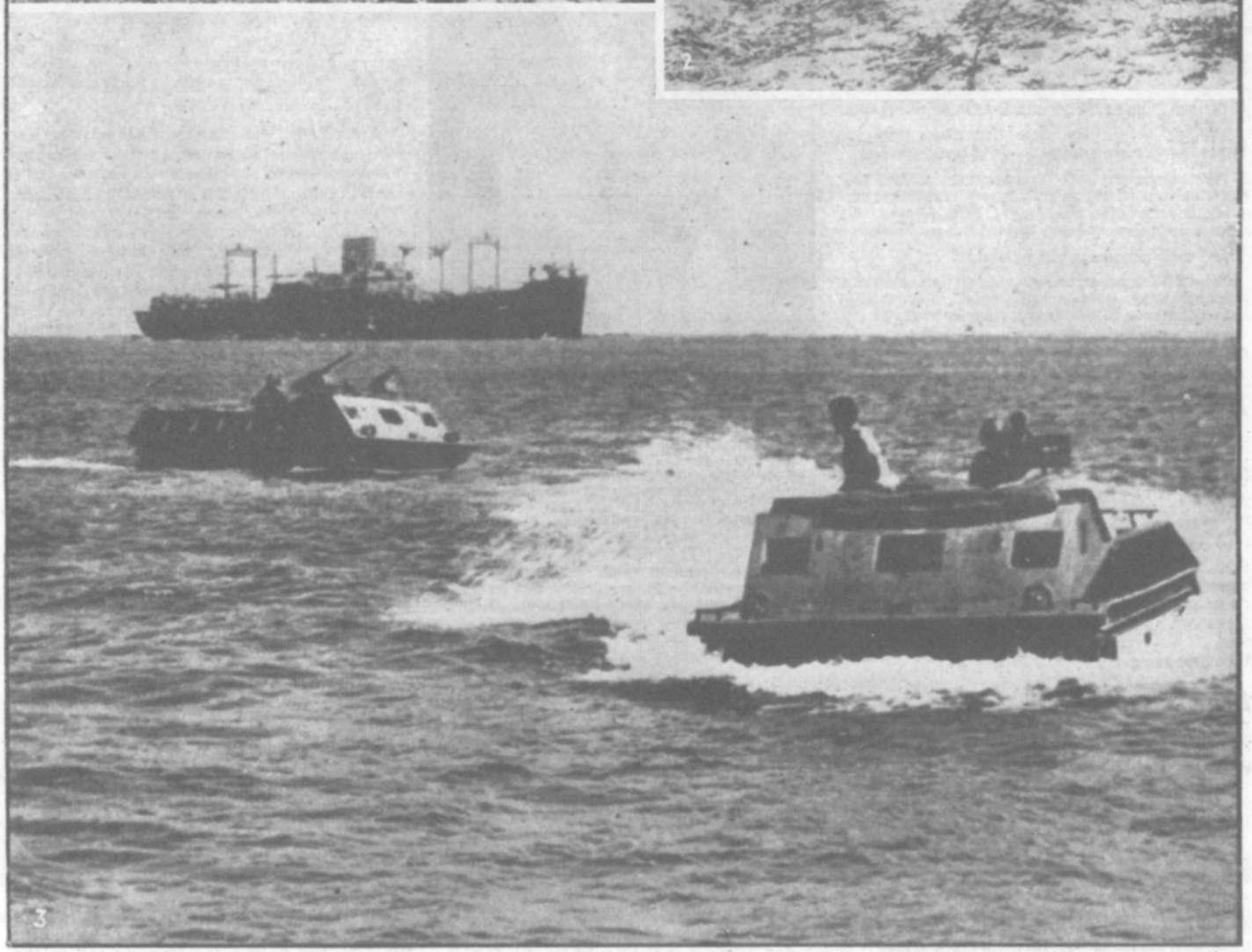
As for the Allies, they hold a multitude of islands to the south and east—the New Hebrides and New Caledonia (Fighting French, this), Nauru and Ocean, Samoa and Fiji—together with the south-eastern tip of New Guinea.

FROM this survey it will be clear that Guadalcanal occupies a key position, *the* key position, in this great war zone. Hence the bitter and prolonged fighting that it has seen of recent months. It was on August 7, 1942 that a body of American Marines seized the harbour of Tulagi, with the islets of Gavutu and Tanambogo commanding its entrance, and the aerodrome recently constructed by the Japanese above the beach at Guadalcanal. Although taken by surprise, the Japanese recovered swiftly, and on the next day struck back at the Americans, inflicting severe losses on their fleet. But the Marines held their ground with the utmost resolution, and soon from Henderson airfield on Guadalcanal American planes were operating against the Japanese in the islands and their accompanying fleets. Six large-scale attempts have been made by the Japanese to drive out the Marines. All have failed, and not only have the Americans held their ground, but they made the enemy pay dearly in warships and transports. The story of the struggle for Guadalcanal is indeed a page of history of which America and her Allies have every reason to be proud.

When the Americans occupied their beach-head on Guadalcanal they were acting on the defensive; the move was dictated by the desire to prevent the Japanese from penetrating farther to the south-east in the direction of the vital sea-passage from America to Australia that runs past the New Hebrides to Brisbane. But it was soon demonstrated that the move had an offensive aspect as well: the possession of the airfield at Guadalcanal and the harbour at Tulagi not only removed the threat of Japanese invasion from the islands to the south, but it helped in large measure to make possible an Allied counter-move along the Solomons towards Japan's important base at Rabaul in New Britain and her mandated islands in the north-east.

But any such move would be imperilled by an attack on the flank from the Japanese in New Guinea. Thus we can realize now the strategical implications of the Allied drive across the Owen Stanley Mountains from Port Moresby to Buna (reported taken by General MacArthur's troops on December 15, 1942). Once, and only if, the Allied western flank in New Guinea is made secure, it should be possible to push on along the four-hundred-mile-long chain of the Solomons to assail the Japanese in the strongholds of their power in the central Pacific. Guadalcanal is a pistol pointed at, if not Japan's heart, at least one of the most menacing of her ugly, far-reaching tentacles.

Guadalcanal, Cockpit of the S.W. Pacific



WAR IN THE SOLOMONS. 1, Japanese prisoners captured by U.S. Marines are seen after their arrival at one of the detention areas on the island of Guadalcanal. 2, This ridge, guarding Henderson airfield in Guadalcanal, was the scene of fierce fighting at the beginning of Nov. 1942, when the enemy made repeated attempts to dislodge Marines entrenched here. The Japs suffered heavy losses. On Nov. 24 Washington stated that all Guadalcanal airfields were in U.S. hands. 3, With guns manned and ready, amphibian tractors from the American transport in the background bring welcome reinforcements to the "Leathernecks." *Photos, Paul Popper, Keystone, Fox*

Japan's Fanatical Belief that She Can Win

"Far too many people in this country," writes Sir Robert Clive, British Ambassador to Tokyo from 1934 to 1937, "simply cannot believe that to defeat the Japanese may be an even tougher proposition than to defeat the Germans." Hence the importance of this article—"I agree with every word and should like to see it widely circulated," says Sir Robert—by Alex. H. Faulkner, The Daily Telegraph's New York Correspondent, published in that newspaper on December 10 and reproduced here by courtesy of the Editor.

IN the broadcast which he made on the eve of his birthday Mr. Churchill lifted a corner of the curtain that hides the future when he discussed the possibility that the war in Europe may come to an end before the war in Asia.

This warning that Japan is a formidable foe was well-timed, for even in the United States, which is much nearer to Hitler's Asiatic ally than Britain is, there are still many people who are inclined to under-estimate the enemies to whom they scornfully refer as "Nips."

There is one man who suffers from no illusions about Japan's toughness. Since his repatriation, Mr. Joseph Grew, the former United States Ambassador to Tokyo, has been speaking and writing continuously in an effort to correct what he considers fallacious thinking on the part of a large proportion of Americans about the war with Japan. Now, when the first anniversary of Pearl Harbour has come round, he has published Report from Tokyo, which sums up his convictions.

Mr. Grew is one of America's most polished diplomats, but this report is written in a forthright style that the most able of journalists might envy. Without disclosing any diplomatic secrets he nevertheless makes it clear that his own Government had been fully informed about the dangers that threatened it. He repeatedly warned it, especially during 1941, reporting that Japan might strike "with dangerous and dramatic suddenness," as in fact she did, at Pearl Harbour.

Writing to a Japanese friend on Sept. 1, 1941, Mr. Grew said without reservation that:

We believe that the Nazis seek to control and alter our whole way of life. Therefore, as a reasonable and sensible measure of self-defence, we determined to help Great Britain to avoid defeat.

In another passage he stated:

The British began to fight this war as amateurs, perhaps, but at least like gentlemen. They trusted like gentlemen to Germany's pledged word.

Elsewhere he asserts:

The British people forgot their rights—they thought only of their duties and their capacities. To the British people our debt is incalculable.

ALMOST immediately after Japan's declaration of war on the United States and Britain, police closed and locked the American Embassy's gates and "from that moment we were regarded and treated as prisoners." A group of Japanese radio experts then immediately came and "went through all our houses with a fine tooth comb, taking away all short-wave radio sets." American missionaries, teachers and newspaper correspondents and business men were ill-treated and "subjected at times to most cruel and barbaric tortures."

Such incidents emphasize the vast differences between the Japanese and more civilized codes of conduct, but Mr. Grew's principal theme is the problem of defeating a country which, in his opinion, is far stronger than the Western peoples realize. He contrasts Japan with Germany as Mr. Churchill by implication did in his broadcast.

I know Germany. I lived there for nearly 10 years. I know Germans well; truculent and bullying and domineering when on the crest of the wave, demoralized in defeat. The Germans cracked in 1918. I have steadfastly believed and I believe today that when the tide of battle turns against them, as it assuredly will, they will crack again.

I know Japan. I lived there for 10 years. I know the Japanese intimately. They won't crack morally or psychologically, or economically, even when eventual defeat stares them in the face. They'll pull in their belts another notch, reduce their rations from a bowl of rice to half a bowl of rice, and fight to the bitter end.

Again he says:

Germany and Italy possess groups of unknown size and power which await only time and opportunity to revolt. In Japan there are no such groups.

Mr. Grew tries to make it clear that to the Japanese there was nothing reckless or foolhardy about challenging the might of the United States. They had previous successes to encourage them. They had defeated the gigantic Manchu empire of China, they had defeated the empire of the Tsars, and finally they had fought against Germany and seen Germany surrender before she was invaded. They unquestionably count on making the United States surrender without necessarily being invaded.

JOSEPH C. GREW, American Ambassador to Tokyo from 1932 until the outbreak of war in Dec. 1941. He is at present Special Assistant to Mr. Cordell Hull, U.S. Secretary of State.
Photo, Topical Press

The Japanese may not intend to take New Orleans or San Francisco or Vancouver or Toronto—in this war. They do intend and expect in dead seriousness to conquer Asia, to drive us out, to force us to make a peace which will weaken us and cause us to grow weaker with time. And then later, in five years or ten years or fifty years, they would use a thousand million men of enslaved Asia and all the resources of the East to strike again.

HE holds that there is no limit to the Japanese desire for conquest. Given this desire, given their estimate of the United States, the attack on Pearl Harbour was a logical development. He holds that Washington was aware of this.

Insisting in another passage that Japanese leaders think they can win, Mr. Grew declares that "they are not suicidally minded incompetents—history will show they have made miscalculations, but they have miscalculated less than most of us suppose."

He seeks to give a clear picture of Japanese strength. He emphasizes that not for one moment should the idea be entertained that the failure of the Japanese forces in China has discouraged the Japanese people. It has merely served to steel them for greater sacrifices. He points out, moreover, that in any case the published Budget figures show that only 40 per cent of the appropriations voted for the Defence forces was expended on the conduct of hostilities in China. Sixty per cent was used to prepare the armed services and industrial plants for the greater emergency to come. Further, only one-fiftieth of the materials and weapons furnished to these services was sent to China, the rest being used to expand and modernize the armies and fleets held in reserve.

ALREADY Japan has conquered an area ten times that of the Japanese empire as it stood a year ago, and obtained control of populations aggregating three times the population of the Japanese empire. Here is a huge aggregate of human beings the majority of whom are docile and capable of tremendous toil.

Mr. Grew regards the fighting spirit of the Japanese soldiers as one of the greatest assets of the Empire.

We are up against a powerful fighting machine; people whose morale cannot and will not be broken by economic hardships; a people who individually and collectively will gladly sacrifice their lives for their Emperor and their nation, and who can be brought to earth only by physical defeat.

He speaks of the "cruelty, brutality and utter bestiality, ruthlessness and rapaciousness of the Japanese military machine which brought on this war."

Americans, he argues, have too long looked upon the Japanese as insignificant people, whose achievements are a poor imitation of American achievements. If, he warns his countrymen, they do not throw everything into the fight they will risk the danger of stalemate; and Japan firmly in possession of the huge area her forces have already seized would constitute for the United States as grave a menace as Nazi Germany securely in control of the European Continent would constitute for the British Isles.

If we fail we pass into slavery and all the world passes into slavery with us! But we will not fail.

THE former Ambassador thinks that the war against Japan will be won by progressively dislodging her forces from all the bases and areas they have occupied and by the gradual destruction of the Japanese Navy, Merchant Marine and Air Force.

The main designs of Japanese propaganda, ridiculous though they may seem to us, have so poisoned the mind of a nation that only complete and final military defeat will convince the Japanese people of their falsehood.

Mr. Grew, who learned to admire many things in Japan, is not bitter about the ordinary Japanese people. Canada and the United States, he argues, cannot stand apart from the destiny of peoples on the other side of the Pacific. But:

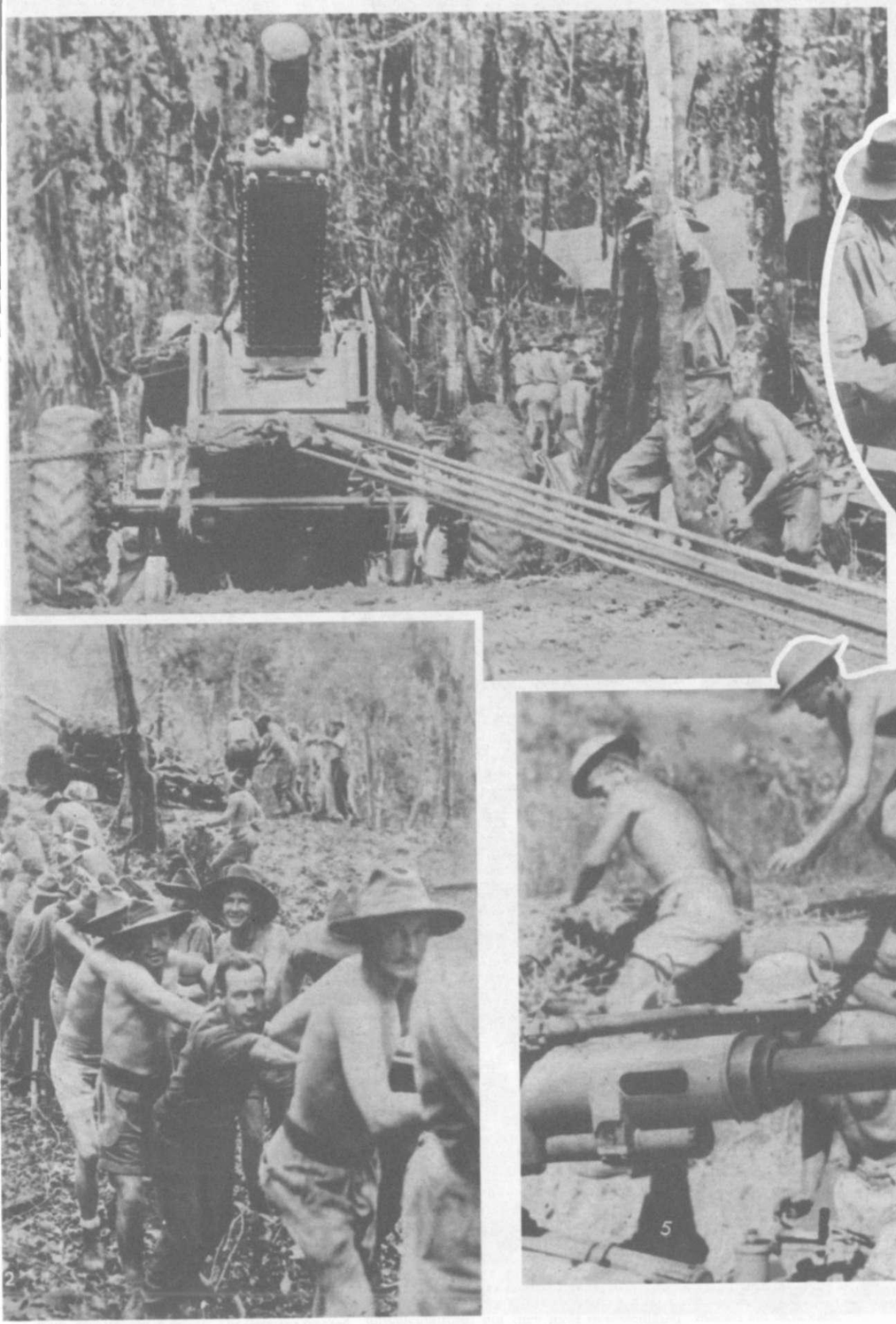
Once militant Japan is out of the picture there should remain no threat of further war in the Pacific area. Japan is the one enemy and the only enemy of peaceful peoples whose shores overlook the Pacific. We can hold out hope of a liberated Japan. A population as great as that of the German Reich waits to be freed not only from its militarist masters but from itself.

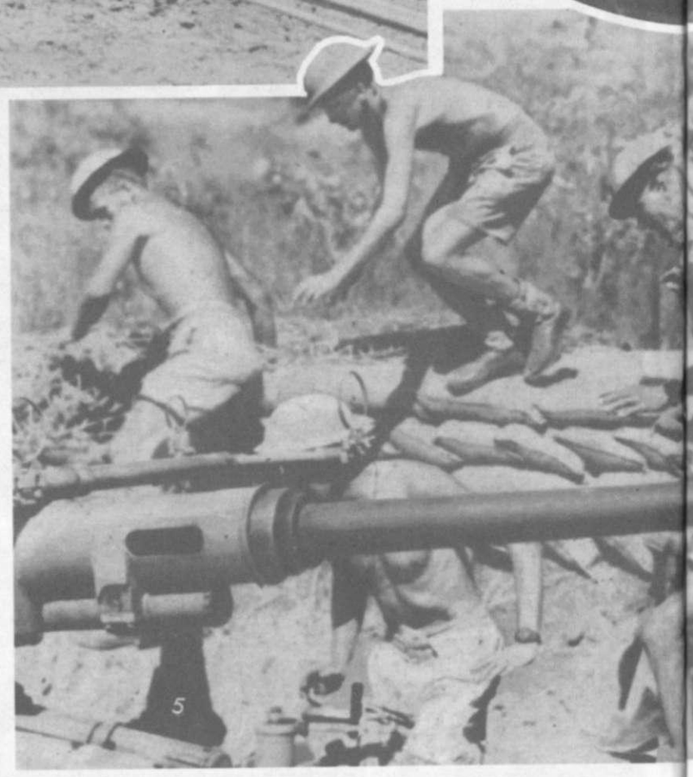
On this note, what Mr. Grew calls "a message to the American people" ends. What he has written is a stirring call to the United Nations to gird up their loins for what may well prove to be a last long pull before victory.

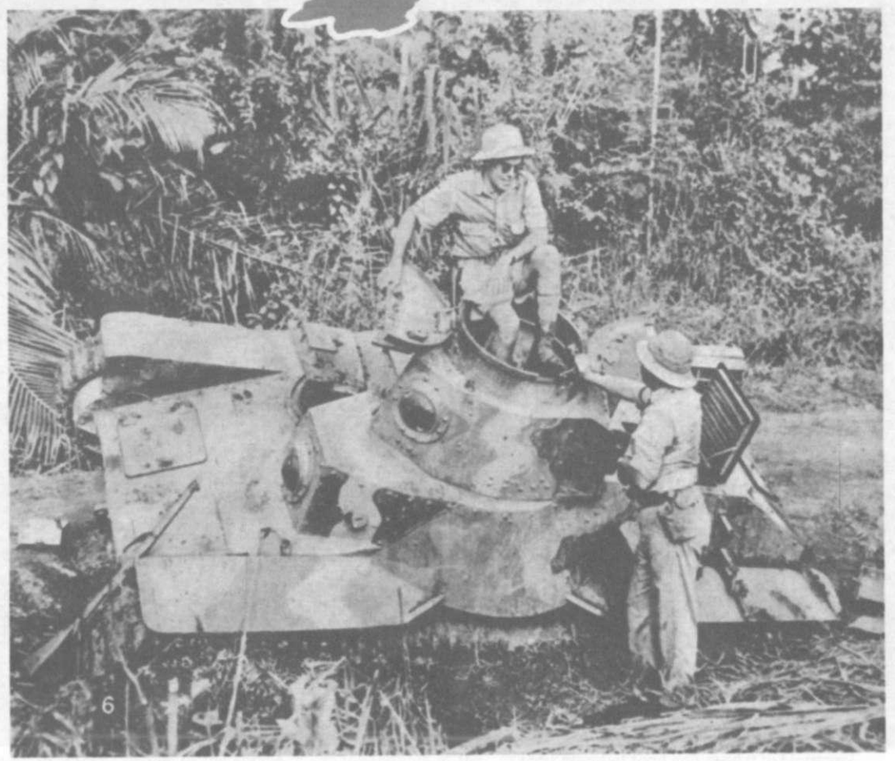
Photo, New York Times Photos

War Comes to New Guinea

To the monster island of the South Seas war has come again—war, not of native tribes, urged on by tribal feuds and cannibal lust, but of 20th-century man. Through the jungle, so dense and dark, so clammy and filled with every kind of creeping thing, American soldier-woodsmen have hacked a way for the jeeps and trucks, the tanks and guns that MacArthur's troops have used to such effect in their struggle to eject the Japanese invader.







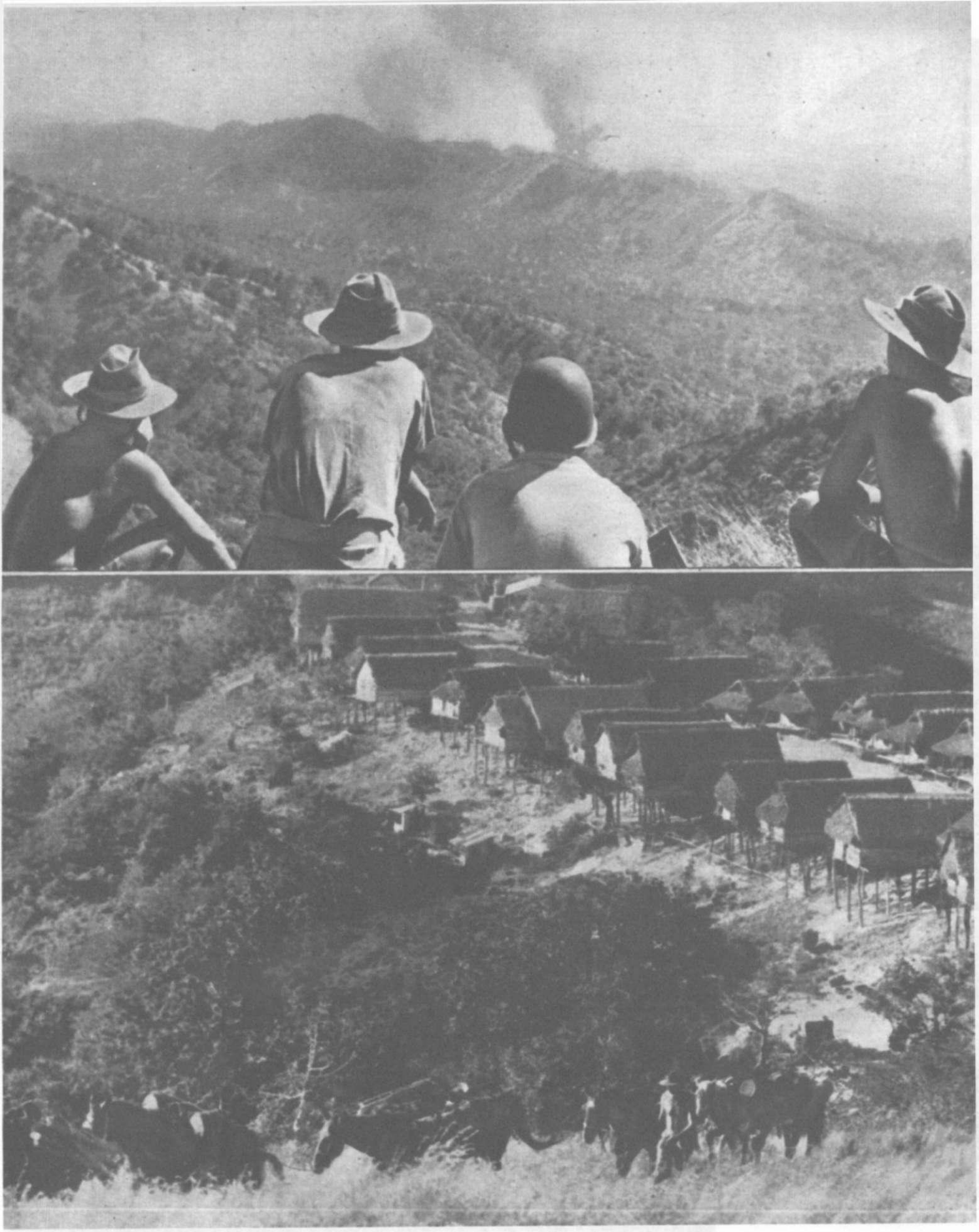
On the Trail Through the Jungle

Impenetrable jungle is the geographers' term for the greater part of New Guinea's natural covering. But human brain and brawn have wiped out the adjective. With extraordinary resolution the Australians have dragged their 25-pounder guns (1, 2) through country which even for the infantry makes very hard going. 3, Gen. MacArthur drives in a jeep with the Australian G.O.C., Gen. Sir Thomas Blamey (back seat), to the fighting zone.

Photos, Sport & General, Associated Press, Paul Popper, Planet News

To the Front with General MacArthur

Over the natives of New Guinea the war has swept like some giant hurricane, engulfing their homes, disrupting their ways of life. Some, dazed and affrighted, have made off into the bush; others, however, have enrolled in the Allies' service. 4, Native canoes provide most useful river transport. 5, Allied A.A. gunners "jump to it" on the signal of enemy planes approaching. 6, U.S. officers inspecting a Jap tank ditched beside the trail.



Bombs in the Tropic War Zone

Photos, Associated Press, Sport & General

From a look-out post on an outlying height of the Owen Stanley range a trio of Aussies and a solitary steel-helmeted American watch Japanese bombers attacking Port Moresby. Bombs have been dropped, and the columns of black smoke tell of hits on the oil drums stacked beside one of the Allied airfields. The lower photograph affords a glimpse of a native village of straw-roofed huts raised on stilts. Through the bush in the foreground a team of packhorses carries supplies to the Allies.

UNDER THE SWASTIKA

Hungry and Cold Are the French This Winter

Since all France was overrun by the Nazi troops in the middle of November, news of how our former Allies are faring has been even sparser and more unreliable than before. This article, by M. HENRY D. DAVRAY, is based on information received prior to the pre-Toulon invasion.

GROANING under the burdens imposed by the occupation authorities, the French people are looking forward with something akin to terror to the trials of another winter.

It has been a lean year for agriculture, owing in some parts to the protracted drought and in others to an excess of rain. Then the lack of transport increases the difficulties. The Germans keep on requisitioning the locomotives and the rolling-stock of the railways—their own wear out rapidly in the service of their armies fighting in Russia; and the R.A.F. is playing havoc with their constructing and repairing works, as well as destroying a large number of trains on the tracks and in the marshalling yards. The locomotives are its special targets in the northern system that serves the coal mines and the most industrialized part of France, where 80 per cent of her iron and steel works and textile factories are to be found. A large proportion of the supply of coal for town and country comes from Belgium and the Nord, and it is now severely hampered. It used to be carried on the waterways in big barges, but the R.A.F. is sinking the few that the Germans have not yet confiscated. Wood was also extensively used in France as fuel and transported on the waterways; and you could see, before the War, long convoys of huge barges stacked high with logs, towed by sturdy little tug-boats coming down from the Morvan (about 140 miles to the south-east) along canals and rivers and converging on the Seine on the way towards Paris, where their loads were piled up along the quays, there to dwindle swiftly as the winter months slipped by. Now there is a shortage of lumbermen for the felling of trees, and a worse shortage of fuel-oil for the tugs. In big and small towns alike log and coal yards remain empty, and so will the fireplaces all through the cold season.

AS for food, the problem is no less crucial. In such fertile regions as the Vexin, the Beauce, the Brie and the Limogne, where agriculture is highly developed, it has suffered seriously from the drought; the wheatheads were light, the straw was short, clover and lucerne yielded no second growth, hay shrivelled in the meadows; and there is sure to be a shortage of fodder for the cattle also.

At harvest-time townspeople went to help the farmers. Those who went to lift potatoes received, for two weeks' work, 60 lb. of potatoes, and 140 lb. for four weeks; married men received in addition 60 lb. for their wives and the same weight for each child. On the big farms and on the large estates in the occupied area the Germans confiscated 40 per cent of the agricultural and cattle produce as soon as it became available. Another 40 per cent is requisitioned by the French authorities to assure the adequate nourishment of the population, which leaves to the farmer only 20 per cent to dispose of or use.

France is a country whose land is parcelled out between nearly ten million owners, all of whom dig their gardens, however small, and sow and plant, making use of every patch in order to get a plentiful crop that can allow a "swop" with the neighbours. But the season has been bad, and the crops are scanty. In Normandy and in Brittany, along the Channel coast, rain has spoilt the potatoes; they are very small when they are not diseased, the biggest not larger than an egg, and plants have yielded less than a pound each. Tomatoes and beans did not mature. In other provinces, e.g. Touraine and Burgundy, dry weather was the cause of the trouble. Vegetables were *cuits sur place* (cooked on the ground), even weeds; and people who breed rabbits, to make up for the lack of butcher's meat, had to feed them with tree-leaves. Goats found nothing to graze upon along the side-paths of roads or lanes where they are usually chained.

SOUTH of the Loire, certain parts of the country have enjoyed more favourable weather. An old lady from Paris, who owns an estate in Berry and has lived on it since the war, has managed to grow a sufficient crop of oats and barley for her horse and grain for her poultry, although her gardener and her farmer are prisoners-of-war in Germany. At harvest-time the difficulties began; but she succeeded in hiring 18 persons to help with the threshing, and she even managed to gather enough victuals to feed them according to custom. The meals were composed of rabbits and vegetables, washed down with wine and an inferior kind of brandy, these latter not being served everywhere, as owing to the drastic German requisitions wine is rationed, a family of four receiving about one gallon a week. As to alcohol, it is confiscated for industrial use.

THERE is a constant struggle between producers and the German officials. The cunning French farmers contrive to outwit the enemy in order to keep as much of their produce as they can for themselves and to dispose of it for the benefit of neighbours, the people of the village or the inhabitants of the next market-town, who roam about on bicycles in quest of some "grub." Maximum prices are fixed for everything, but they are no use for these cash dealings, which reach from 5 to 15 times the official tariff.

A friend of mine, perched on an old crock, with one or two baskets of fruit, goes out in the open country early in the morning; and after riding for miles he will, if he is lucky, bring back a few ounces of butter, an egg or two, some lard, which he exchanged for his apricots or his peaches. He may bring back a pint of milk or, as the other day, a duckling! You may also see him sturdily treadling uphill, carrying on his back a bundle of fodder or a sack of grain for his rabbits and his fowls. And there are tens of thousands like him all around towns in France.

RATION-BOOKS entitle you to a certain quantity—a very small one—of various foodstuffs; but they do not guarantee that you will be able to buy them in the shops. You may go for several weeks without meat, milk, butter, cheese, fats, if you have only the shops to rely on. French people use a large quantity of oil not only as dressing for green salads, but also for cooking and for frying; the ration is two and a half ounces per month—but they seldom get any. Things you have to do without, ration or no ration, are soap and writing-paper, body linen, household napery, woollens, socks and stockings, mending-wool and darning-cotton. Shoes, boots and slippers are nowhere to be found, and when you take your old ones to the cobbler to be re-soled, he will tell you that he has no nails or no leather. In the cheap restaurants of Paris and big towns they manage to cook dishes of turnip or carrot tops without any kind of fat, *Ça vous emplit le bidon, mais ça ne vous nourrit pas*, as a skinny journeyman said (It fills your drum, but it does not feed you).

The Germans have two reasons at least for resolving that the land shall be stripped bare. One is their fear of an invasion; they don't want the invading armies to find any supplies, so that the Allied commissariat will be compelled to bring all provisions across the sea. The other is that they want to compensate the shortage of rationing in Germany. In his recent harvest thanksgiving oration on that subject, Field-Marshal Goering put it very clearly. Under the New Order the *Herrenvolk* are entitled to deprive the occupied peoples of their essential food and send it to Germany. The Germans are taskmasters for whom others must slave and starve. Whoever starved, said Goering, the Germans would not; and French people are beginning to think that very little indeed will be left when the Hitler devotees have had their fill this winter.

LES HALLES, the great central market of Paris, presents a tragic spectacle under the German occupation. Hungry Parisians are confronted by rows of empty barrows and depleted stalls in what was once one of Europe's busiest and most thriving centres. German police control the streets, and all available food is sent to the Reich. *Photo, Associated Press*

The War Comes Very Near to Sicily

With the Allies striving their hardest to eject from Tunisia Axis forces which are being constantly reinforced from across the Sicilian Channel and supported by aircraft operating from Sicilian airfields, Sicily is already playing a considerable part in the War. That part may soon be greater yet, as HENRY BAERLEIN suggests in the article that follows.

In Mussolini's programme—carefully considered, but not quite carefully enough—a star role was reserved for Sicily: from her aerodromes the Regia Aeronautica was to sail forth ruthlessly for the destruction of Malta, an operation that was to take about half-an-hour. Something went wrong, however; and in due course the Sicilian aerodromes have been receiving a number of visits from the R.A.F. These aerodromes will now be more battered than ever, as the war moves in Sicily's direction. "They intend," says the Italian wireless, "to attack even the sacred soil of our country"—though it is a little difficult to see why Italy's soil is more sacred than that of any other country, unless it be because it is the home of that *sacro egoismo* of which we used to hear so much.

SICILIAN AIRFIELDS have been greatly developed by the Luftwaffe during the past two years, and the majority of the heavy raids on Malta were launched from these bases. This photo shows a German-occupied airfield in the island. In the foreground bombs are ready to be loaded on to the waiting planes. A map of Sicily's air-bases will be seen in the opposite page.

Photo, Presse Diffusion, Lausanne

Yes, Sicily will have to bear a heavy burden. It is the most convenient part of Italy for the Allies to invade, seeing that the distance from Tunis is little more than ninety miles. It so happens that the southern and western shores are generally flat, whereas those to the north and east are steep and rocky, rising in many places to very considerable heights direct from the sea. And in the south is a most convenient harbour, that of Syracuse, from where in other days the daily ship to Malta used to sail, the distance being about the same as that which divides Tunis from the west of the island. Syracuse stands at the end of a large arm of the sea, the land at either side almost enclosing it. If we decide to make for Syracuse we shall be following the excellent example of the ancient Greeks—who came, of course, by sea and captured the place. They liked it so well that they built temples, theatres, and so on in the city and its vicinity; one at least of the undying plays of Aeschylus had its first performance in a theatre at Syracuse.

The coast to the west of Syracuse offers landing facilities, although there is no harbour to speak of till we reach Trapani. Round the corner at Palermo is the best-equipped harbour, for which reason it has been attended to on various occasions by the R.A.F. To the north of Syracuse we find the roomy seaplane base, Augusta; and still farther north there is Catania, whose commercial harbour is not to be despised. But for the landing of troops Syracuse and the coast to the west of it would as likely as not be chosen.

All round the island there are aerodromes which are easily accessible to bombers and most of them even to fighters from Tunis or Malta. Of course, they are equally accessible to planes coming from Calabria on the Italian mainland; and unless Italy capitulates the R.A.F. will have to advance by stages.

Some have thought that it would be advisable to by-pass Sicily, and make for Sardinia, which is at the same distance from Tunis. But Sardinia is an inhospitable island, with far fewer facilities than Sicily, which is the largest, the most populous, and the most fertile in the whole Mediterranean. It has quite a good railway system; and from Messina it is only a mile or two across to the mainland, whereas Sardinia is much farther removed. (*See* map, page 407).

But what of the interior of Sicily? For the most part it is so mountainous that it is likely to be avoided in military operations. Isolated and poverty-stricken, the people there are very lukewarm in their adhesion to Fascist principles. But indeed, all over Sicily we find that the present regime is not regarded with much enthusiasm, notwithstanding Mussolini's slogans painted in huge black letters on many a whitewashed structure. Part of this lack of enthusiasm is due to the rigorous steps that were taken against the Mafia, that confraternity of brigands which dominated Sicily for many a year; part is attributable to the discontent caused by absentee landowners, who prefer to live in the towns of Sicily, even in Naples or Rome, rather than on their estates.

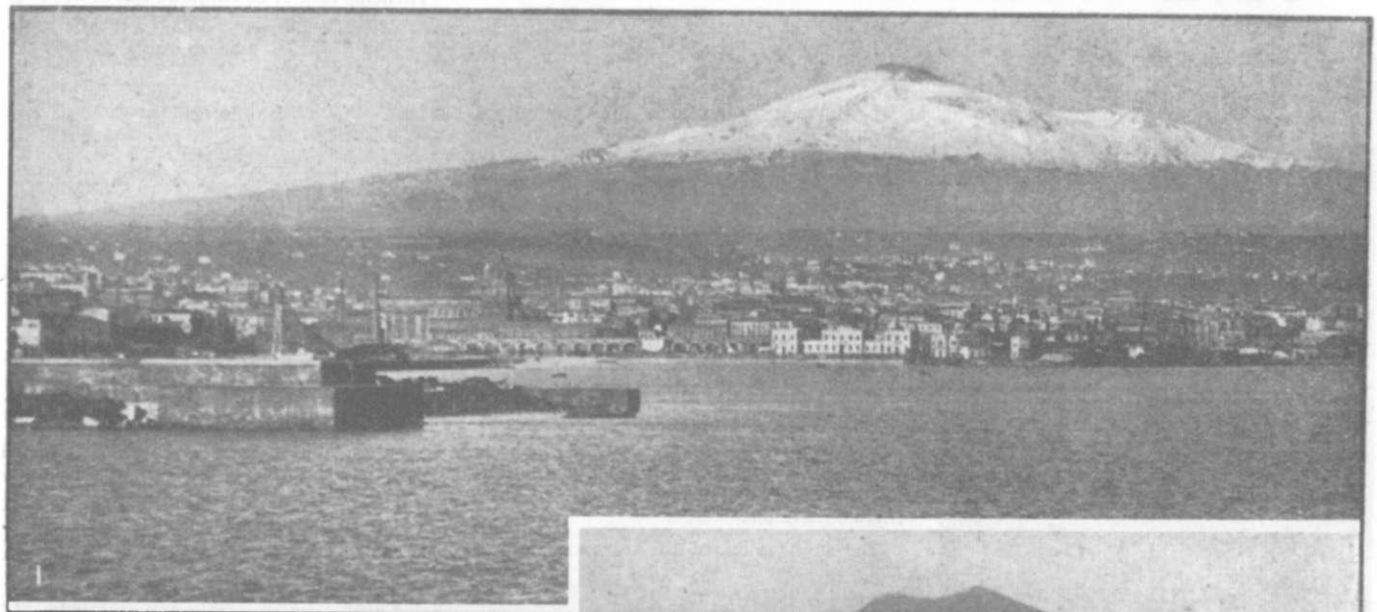
In considering Sicily from the strategic point of view one must naturally take into account the probable attitude of the population to an invading force. Under the rule of the last sovereigns of Naples and Sicily—those Bourbons of infamous memory, who after being ejected during the Napoleonic regime were restored by the Allies after Waterloo in 1815—the people were so oppressed that they received Garibaldi and his thousand heroes with open arms when they landed at Marsala on May 11, 1860. That is not to say that a similar welcome awaits the armies from Tunis today, but there will be many Sicilians who will be moved by the wireless admonitions that are being addressed to them from New York by Giuseppe Luchis, a compatriot of theirs and a veteran of the last war.

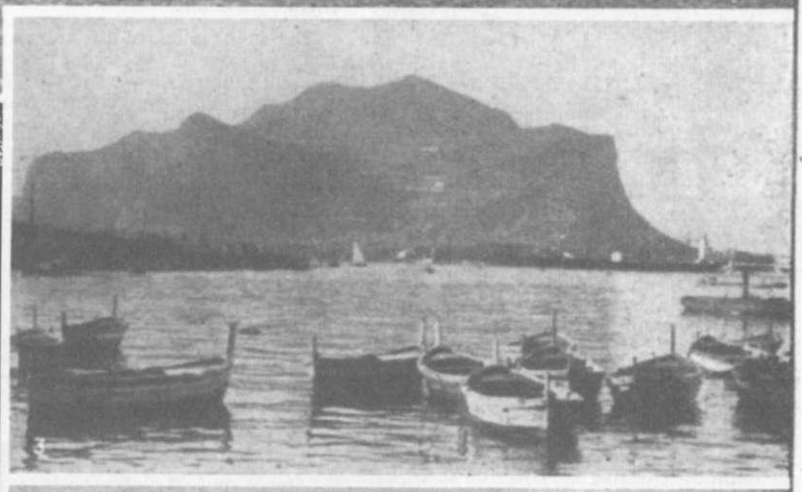
"The American armies of Liberation," he has told them, "will shortly be coming to your island... They are not coming to sack or pillage your towns. Hold out friendly hands to them. Take up your arms and join these armies in the struggle against Fascism . . . Sicily will shortly become the centre of operations in this terrible war." Luchis knows very well that while the average Sicilian is a prudent and patient person, resigned to his lot—*come Dio vuole* is his equivalent of *kismet*—he can break out into the most terrific passion.

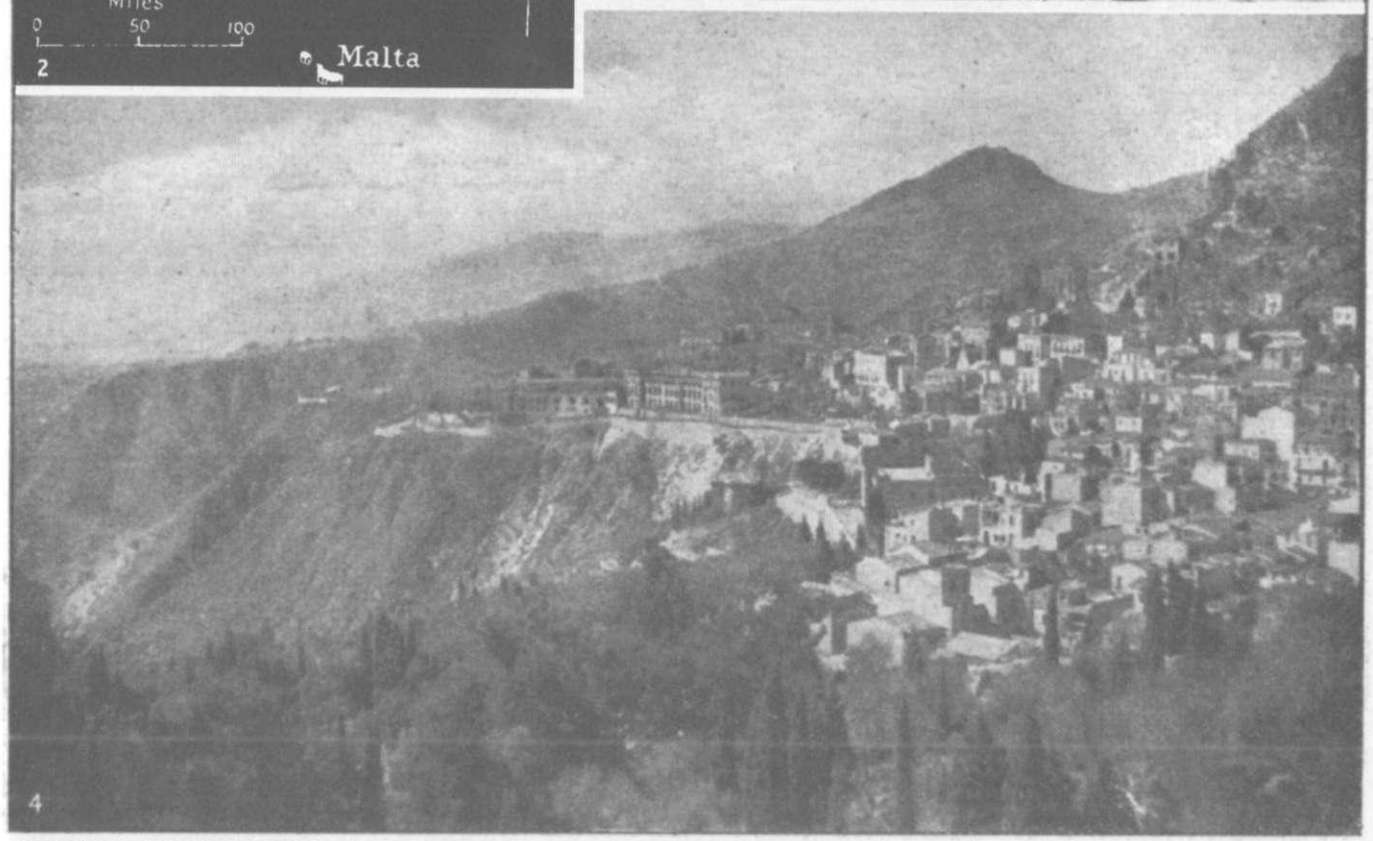
Strategically speaking, Sicily is involved in both of the two triangles based on Tunis—the first stretching from Tunis to Sardinia and Sicily, the other from Malta to Sicily and back to Tunis. The former is likely to be the scene of an intensive air and naval struggle, even if the United Nations succeed in rapidly occupying the port of Bizerta. Of course, the possession of Bizerta will vastly assist in removing the menace from ships passing between Tunis and Sicily. In the midst of the second triangle lies the small Italian island of Pantelleria, which has been strongly fortified by the Italians (who in recent years, like the Japanese in their mandated islands, prohibited all visits, even of the civilian population); it is said to have submarine nests hollowed out of its flanks. Although its harbour is only large enough for one or two destroyers, it has an aerodrome which has caused us a certain amount of inconvenience.

Before it is rendered harmless, before we can secure a Sicilian base, there will have to be a good deal of fighting, for the agents of the Gestapo are everywhere; and though the population be inflamed against them they will not find it an easy matter to shake off their evil domination.

Italian Island Now a Base of the Luftwaffe







STRATEGIC POINTS OF SICILY. 1, General view of Catania from the harbour with snow-capped Mount Etna in the background. This port has a population of about 245,000. 2, Sicilian air strongholds. Names underlined indicate aerodromes with full facilities and concrete runways. "S" implies seaplane or flying-boat accommodation, often in addition to the airfield. Apart from the places named, there are numbers of auxiliary airfields which can be used by the Luftwaffe. 3, Shipping in the Bay of Palermo ; this famous city lies under the shadow of Monte Pellegrino. 4, Rising in picturesque confusion, Messina faces the Italian mainland.

Map by courtesy of The Daily Telegraph. Photos, Fox, Dorien Leigh

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by **Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.**

NORTH AFRICA continued to be the main theatre of war in the world, marked by more movement and a sense of urgency on both sides—characteristics which differentiated it from the heavy bludgeon-blows given and taken by both sides in Russia, and from the bantam-weight sparring in the Australasian zone. Then in the India-Burma area activity was confined to patrols and air raids; warnings were given to look out for the dropping of Japanese parachute-borne spies in India, labelled appropriately para-spies—a reward of £375 was offered for the live capture of such enemies.

North Africa fighting is divided into two kinds: one, the westward drive along the coast through Libya, and the other the holding fighting in Tunisia. Both zones have been objectives of important air support within the tactical fighting areas and within the wider strategical circle which reaches right up to Northern Italy.

DEALING with the Libyan action first: Rommel's retreating columns of vehicles of all kinds were pounded mercilessly by the R.A.F. from El Alamein to El Agheila. When Rommel halted at El Agheila, the R.A.F. began to bomb, cannon-shell and machine-gun the areas behind the bottle-neck defences held by the reorganized formations of the Afrika Korps. Principal target was Marble Arch, a desert landing-ground 40 miles behind the Rommel front. The attack was so continuous that the Luftwaffe was unable to maintain its aircraft at Marble Arch and German fighters were forced to retreat 50 miles to Nofilia aerodrome.

That decided the issue. With the nearest fighter aircraft situated 90 miles behind his surface fighting front, Rommel could not maintain an effective air covering force, and his position at El Agheila became untenable. Before the Eighth Army units on the ground did more than "probe" Rommel's positions by reconnaissance raiding forces, the commander of the Afrika Korps packed his troops into lorries and fled westward under cover of dark on the night of Dec. 12-13, 1942. The attack upon Marble Arch began nine days earlier; its neutralization was completed in six days. For three days before the German evacuation of El Agheila, R.A.F. and Allied fighter-bombers flashed unhindered all over the German advanced ground positions, bombing, machine-gunning, and cannon-shelling every available target. So well dug-in and widely dispersed were the German forces that it was almost impossible to use medium bombers against them with advantage. But on Sunday, December 13, Allied fighter-bombers made 300 sorties during the day—a record for any theatre of war—bombing, shell-riddling, damaging and firing vehicles on the road west of El Agheila.

ROMMEL'S fleeing columns will get no rest from the attentions of the air power of the United Nations grouped within the tactical requirements of General Montgomery's Eighth Army. Almost for the first time during the course of the war the Axis troops are learning the meaning of air superiority. What their aircraft did to the occupants of the crowded roads of Europe, the R.A.F. and the Allied and Dominion air units are doing to them; but this time there are no refugees—those pitiable victims who gave the Luftwaffe "sportsmen" such easy targets. Every target along the coastal road of Libya is a uniformed enemy, the remains of Mussolini's "Roman" legions and their friends the Huns.

The importance of the advance from El Agheila from the British point of view is that our forces have now passed the most southerly point of the North African Mediterranean coastline. Every mile advanced brings them nearer to Malta and to the British First Army in Tunisia. Malta is 460 miles from El Agheila, 340 from Sirte, 240 from Misurata, 220 from Homs and Tripoli. Misurata to Gabès (Tunisia) is 300 flying miles; Gabès to Malta is 300 miles. Thus, if Rommel retreats to Misurata, he must pass into a zone wherein enfilade air attacks can be brought to bear upon him from Maltese airfields by long-range fighters and bombers, able to operate safely under the air cover provided by the tactical fighter units attached to the Eighth Army.

FROM the air point of view Rommel's retreat is not proceeding westwards to a safer zone. Actually he is retreating to a more dangerous zone. The strategy behind his retreat is therefore bound up with the military situation of the Axis forces elsewhere—probably in Italy and Sicily. His delaying action is slight, just enough to distinguish his movement from precipitate flight—and perhaps just enough to give the Axis defence forces in Sicily and Metropolitan Italy time to construct stout defences, which again is the indicated purpose behind the Axis operations in Tunisia.

In Tunisia the situation has not been so favourable to the British First Army, for there the Axis forces have had the advantage of short lines of communication and a number of advanced airfields, some within five minutes' flying-time of the surface fighting forces. In consequence the zonal superiority in the air over the fighting units has assisted the German troops and hampered the British.

Airfields cannot be conjured out of nothing overnight. They require time for construction. The high-speed aircraft of today demand room for take-off and alighting, and it is useless to begin to use a forward landing-ground too soon if the result is to be but crashes. But, almost coincident with the advance from El Agheila, Allied advanced landing-grounds came into use in Tunisia, scratched out of any flat ground among the mountains, and from them American Lightning twin-engined fighters and British Spitfires have been flying, so that the Luftwaffe has had to fight for its results more frequently than when the United Nations' flying-fields were too far back to permit of patrols of more than short duration over the fighting zone. Soon it should be possible to bring the slight German advances in Northern Tunisia to a halt, and then advance.

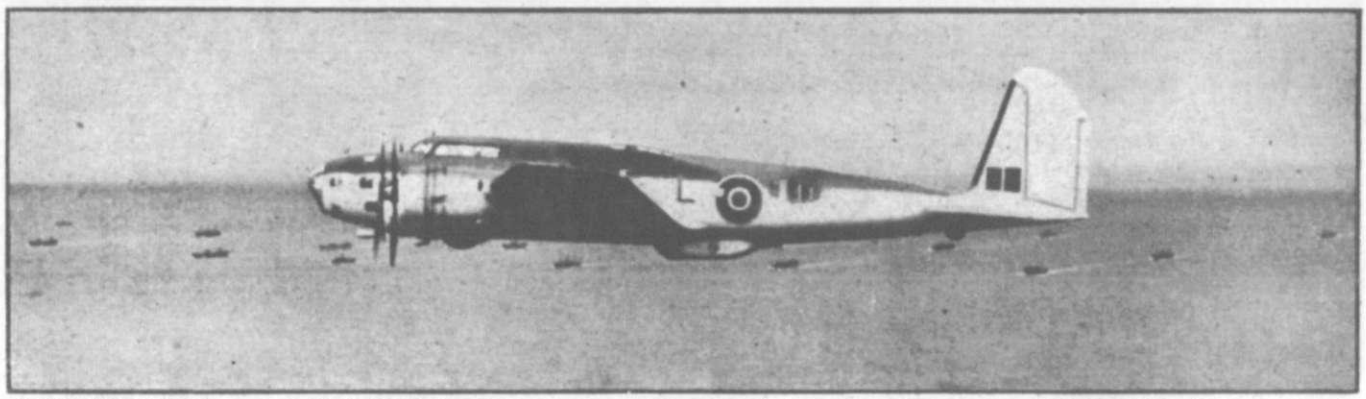
The contrasting lessons of ample and of insufficient air power have been written clearly in the skies of Libya and of Tunisia. The United Nations need no further lessons in the all-important factor of air power. Air power is the spear-head of the forces which will drive the Axis out of Africa.

IN Europe nearly 100 day bombers attacked the Philips radio factory at Eindhoven, Holland, on December 6, 1942, and set it on fire; 12 bombers were missing. On the same day Fortresses attacked the Fives-Lille locomotive works, and Liberators the Abbeville-Drucat German fighter base. About 400 fighters provided diversionary sweeps and air cover. Karlsruhe and Pforzheim were bombed on December 6-7, Turin on the nights of December 8-9, 9-10, and 11-12. Naples was bombed by Mediterranean air forces by day on December 11, and again the following night; while Palermo was bombed on the night of December 12-13—all strategic raids connected with the war in North Africa.

In 1938 the U.S.A.A.F. had 1,800 officers and 20,000 men; today they have over 1,000,000; by the end of 1943 they will have over 2,000,000. During 1942 America produced 49,000 war aircraft. From February 1 to December 5, 1942 the U.S. Army Air Forces destroyed 928 enemy aircraft and probably destroyed 276; they lost 130, and 104 are missing.

FLYING FORTRESS bombers, making 1,063 sorties against Germans, up to November 30 lost a total of 32 Forts, while they had destroyed 293, probably destroyed 150, and damaged 192 enemy aircraft.

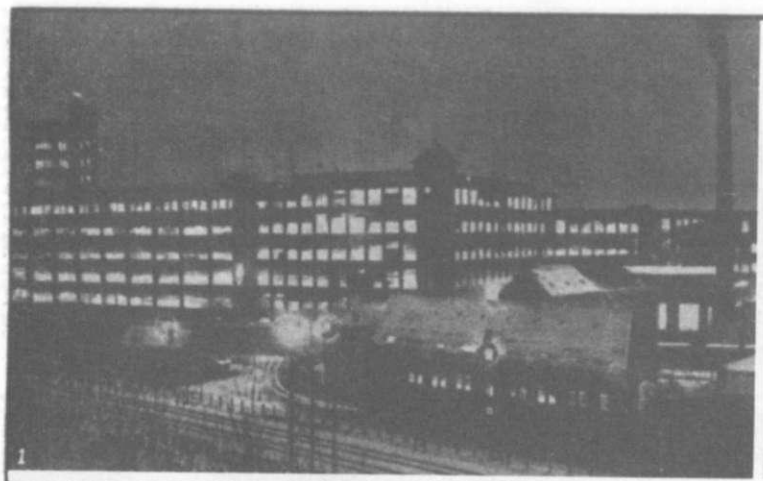
Land and air fighting continued in the Buna area of Papua after the occupation of the Gona area by the Allies on December 10. Allied air power there is slowly wearing down Japanese sea transport power.

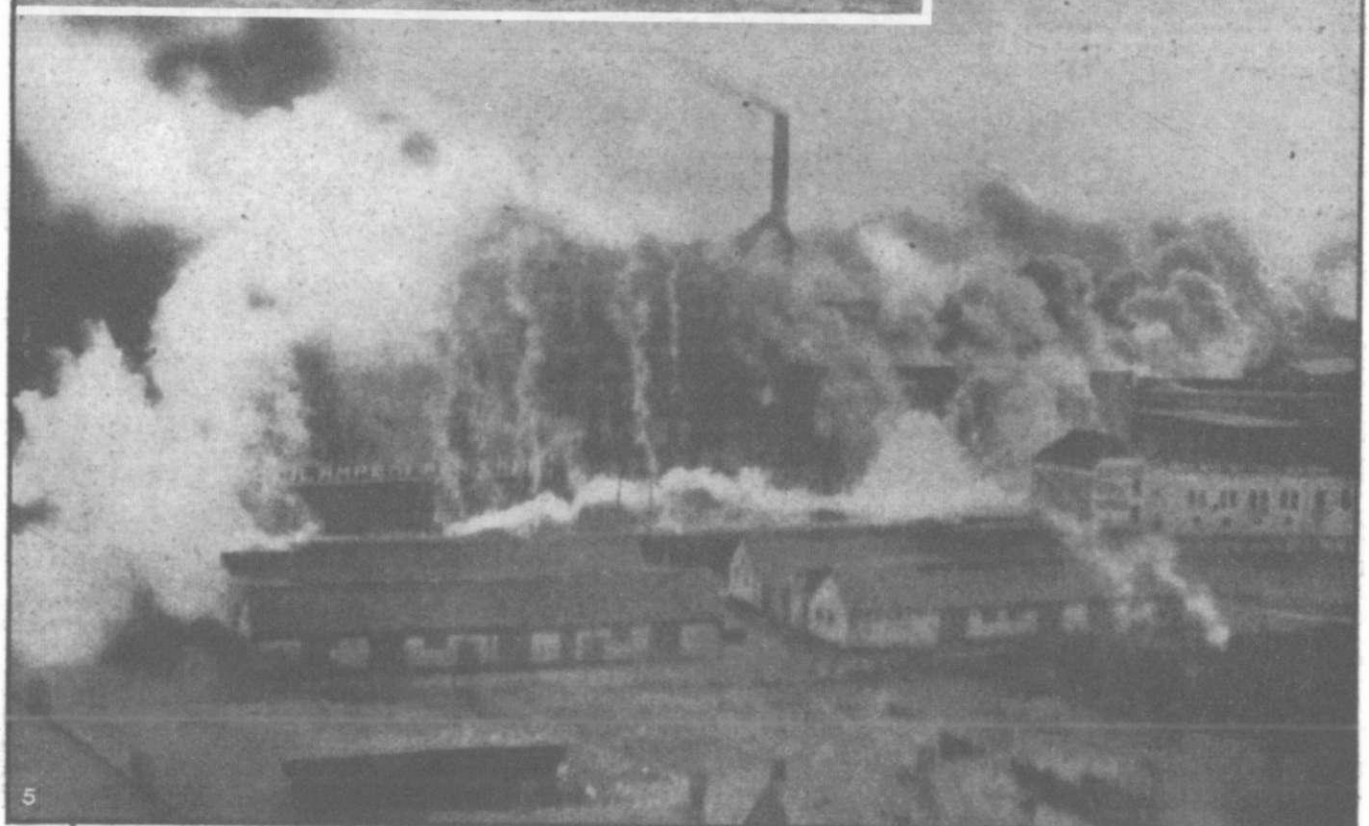


FLYING FORTRESS in service with the R.A.F. Coastal Command carrying out patrol duties over a large convoy. U.S. Fortress bombers are reported to have a ceiling of 40,000 ft. They carry a crew of 6-9, and their bomb load is from 4-5 tons. These powerful machines have a maximum speed of about 300 m.p.h.

Photo British Official: Crown Copyright

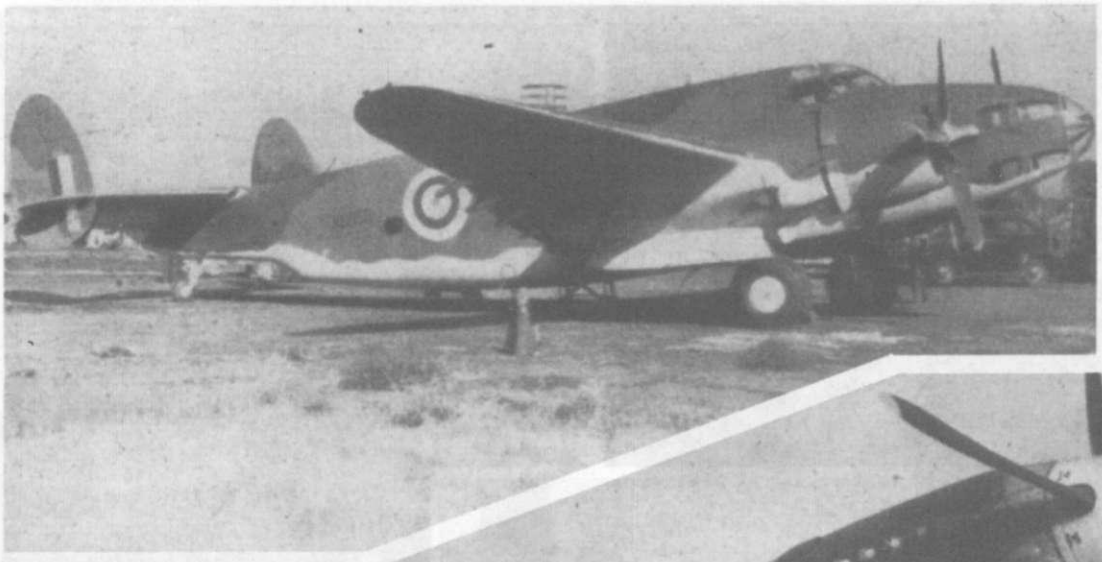
On a December Day They Bombed Eindhoven





DAYLIGHT ATTACK ON HITLER'S CHIEF RADIO PLANT. On Dec. 6, 1942, nearly 100 R.A.F. bombers, unescorted by fighters, attacked the Philips radio works at Eindhoven, in Nazi-occupied Holland—Europe's biggest and most important radio-valve producing plant, now working for Germany. 1, A pre-War view. 2, Fires enveloping the buildings. 3, Boston bomber crews leaving their operational station on their return. 4, Map showing position and distance from London. 5, A closer view of the blazing factory. *Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; E.N.A., Planet News*

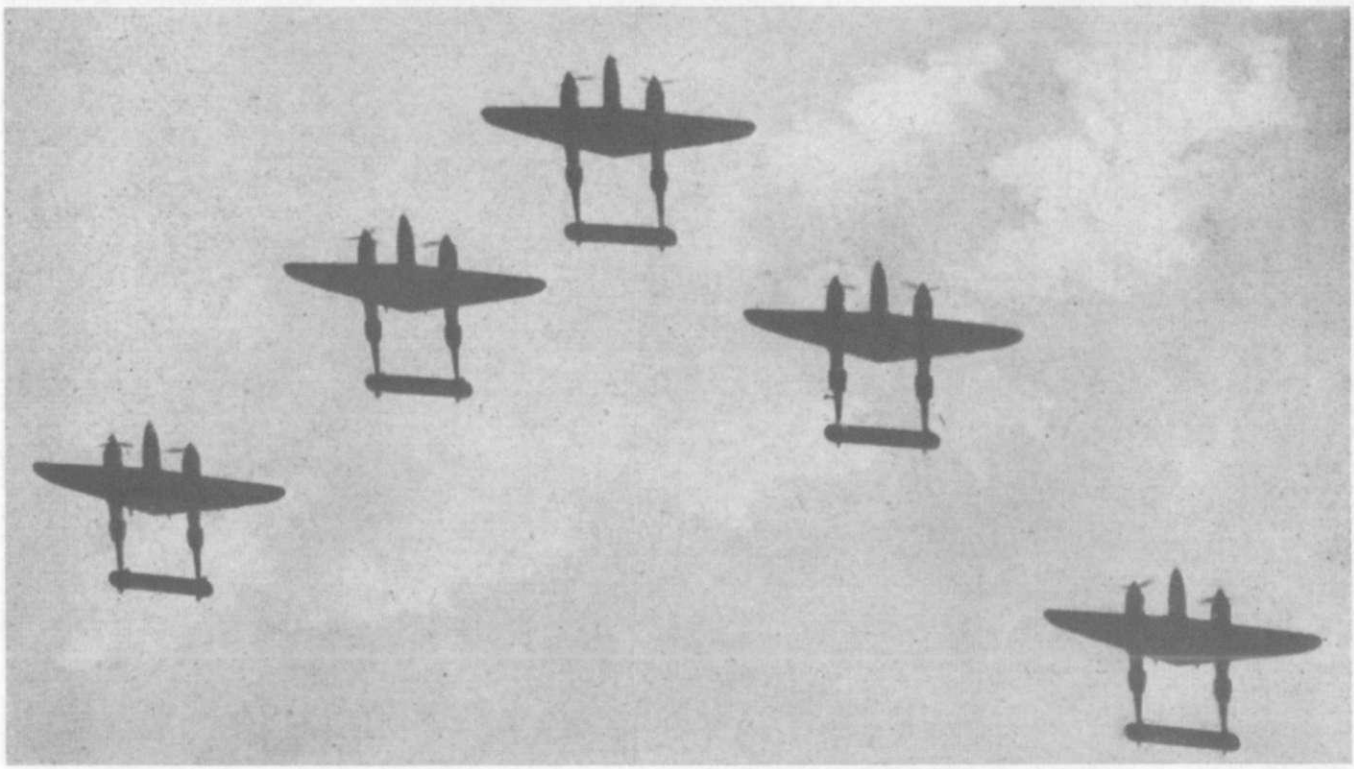
Newcomers to Our Battle-line in the Air



VENTURA (left), Bomber Command's latest light bomber, is a Lockheed product, and is faster and stronger than the same firm's Hudson. It is powered by two Pratt and Whitney Wasp engines and carries a crew of four. The Ventura has a length of 57 ft. 6 in., a wing span of 65 ft. 6 in. and a swept up tail of 25 ft. 10 in. span. Guns in the nose and elsewhere protect all vital parts. These planes are now being mass-produced in America and a large number has already been delivered in Britain. Venturas took a leading part in the great attack on Eindhoven. (See p. 471.)

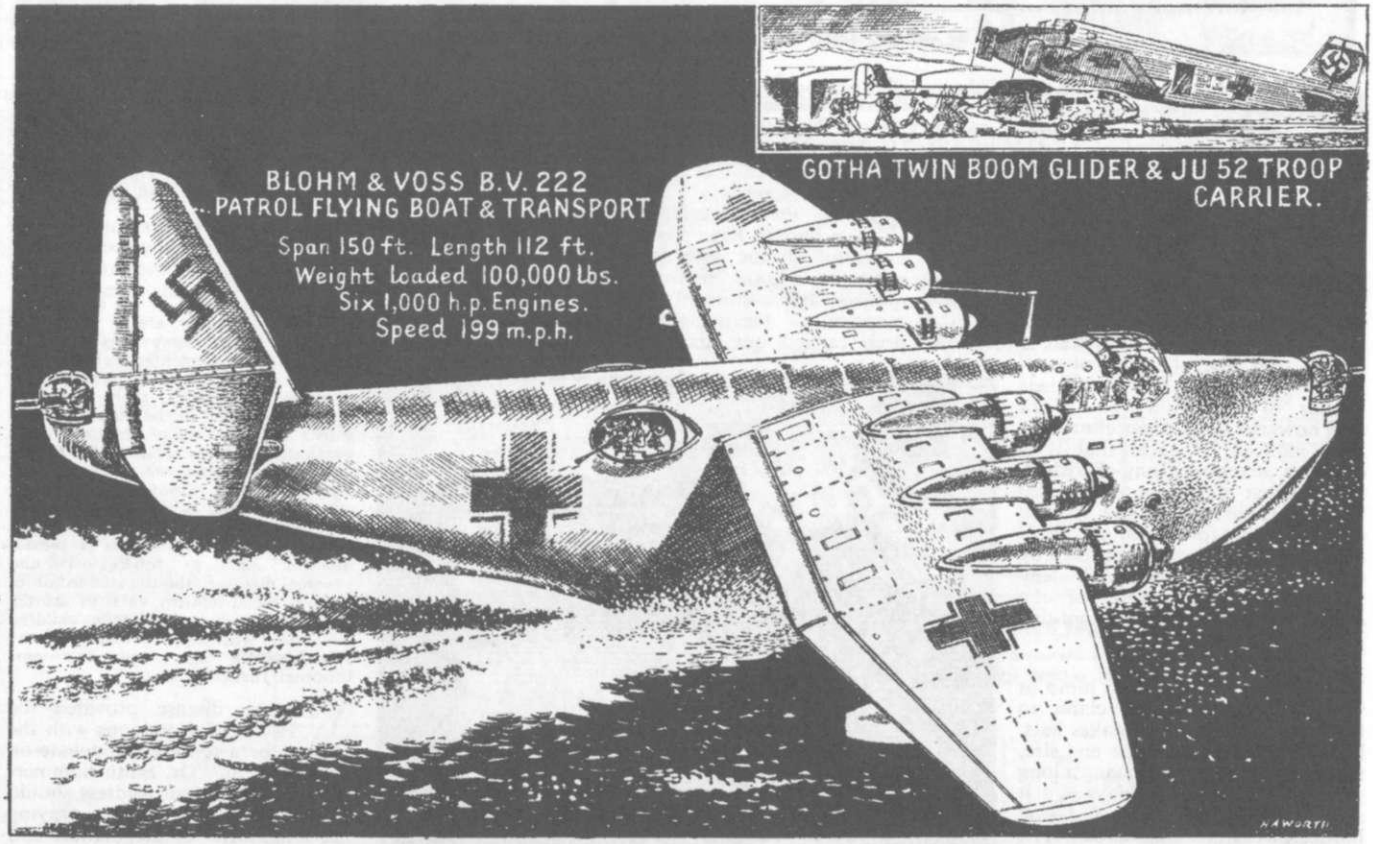
SPITFIRE, the world's most famous fighter, an improved type of which is seen on the right. This Vickers-Supermarine aircraft is now being used with deadly effect against the Luftwaffe. Speed, ceiling and many other features remain secret, though it has been announced that the new Spitfire has a Rolls-Royce Merlin 61 engine, instead of the Merlin 45 or 46. Armament is reported to be two cannon and four machine-guns housed in the wings. To take up the extra power a greater propeller-blade area was necessary. The height of the aircraft precluded any lengthening of the blades, so the problem has been solved by using four blades instead of two. The chief difference in appearance between this and previous types, apart from the longer nose, is to be seen in the wings. These have underslung radiators; there are also minor differences in the engine installation.

The Spitfire achieved immortal fame during the Battle of Britain in 1940, when great aerial conflicts took place over this country by day and hundreds of German machines were destroyed.



LOCKHEED LIGHTNING (P38), long-range fighter which has been in action in Tunisia. This machine is powered with two 12-cylinder 1,150 h.p. Allison engines, has a speed of over 400 m.p.h. and a high rate of climb. Its ceiling is between 35,000 and 39,000 ft. Armament consists of four machine-guns, and one 20 m.m. cannon in the nose. Wing span, 52 ft.; length, 38 ft.; height, 9 ft. 10 in. Easily identified by their twin fuselage, Lockheed Lightnings are here seen flying over their base in Britain. *Photos, Associated Press, G.P.U.*

Germany's Biggest Plane Takes Troops to Tunis


BLOHM & VOSS B.V. 222
PATROL FLYING BOAT & TRANSPORT
Span 150 ft. Length 112 ft.
Weight loaded 100,000 lbs.
Six 1,000 h.p. Engines.
Speed 199 m.p.h.
GOTHA TWIN BOOM GLIDER & JU 52 TROOP CARRIER.

THE BLOHM AND VOSS BV222 is a giant six-engined type of flying-boat which the Germans have employed to carry soldiers and war material from Italy to Tunisia. Our long-range fighters shot down one of these machines between Tunis and Sicily at the end of November 1942. Designed by Dr. R. Vogt, the BV222 is reported to carry 80 men, and was intended to operate the transatlantic service before the War. The weight loaded is over 44 tons, the wing span is 150 feet, and the boat's length is 112 feet. The six B.M.W. engines develop 1,000 h.p. each, and the maximum speed is just under 200 m.p.h. Range is 4,400 miles at 170 m.p.h. Built at Hamburg, the first Blohm and Voss was completed in the spring of 1942. The armament consists of twin machine-guns in the fore and aft turrets, and either cannon or heavy machine-guns in port and starboard positions.

Seen inset are a Junkers JU52 troop- and freight-carrying aircraft and a Gotha GO242 twin-boom glider (see also photo below), both reported to have been in action on the Tunisian front. These latter are capable of carrying 21 fully-equipped infantrymen besides a crew of two, or up to two tons of freight. Doubtless petrol and small pieces of artillery can be ferried by the enemy across to Tunisia in this manner. These gliders have a span of 79 feet and a length of 52 ft. 6 in. As for the JU52, these were extensively used in Crete and Libya.

REINFORCEMENTS FOR ROMMEL ran the gauntlet of devastating Allied air power in the Battle of Egypt. Ports and landing-grounds received shattering attacks and many enemy airborne transports were destroyed. Left, German paratroops who succeeded in reaching their destination wearily tramp across the desert. Right, a Gotha glider, captured almost undamaged at an airfield in the El Daba area, is seen in its pen.

Diagram specially drawn for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED *by Haworth* — *Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Keystone*

THE HOME FRONT

by E. Royston Pike

ONLY a short time after the Archbishops had graciously announced that women and girls may now enter a church uncovered, the Lord Chancellor has decreed that women need no longer wear hats in Court. The reason given is "a certain change in social habits," which suggests that the women have won a victory for common sense over the lawyers entangled in medieval thoughts and ways. But it is much more likely that there is an economic basis for the move. Indeed, Dr. Dalton, the President of the Board of Trade, is very concerned over the shortage of milliners' materials; and first their Graces of Canterbury and York and now the Lord Chancellor have been induced to agree that it is easier to abandon a long-cherished, if somewhat superstitious, practice than to release straw and ribbon, silk and felt for feminine headgear. After this concession by Church and Law, who will deny the supreme importance of the economic factor in our present-day lives?

FROM hats to Luton is no jump at all. Luton's sole claim to fame, indeed, is that it makes hats, hats of every kind, shape and size, and has made them for many a long year past. But a few days ago it seemed that the days of Luton hat-making were numbered. The Government, it was whispered, had a scheme in hand for the transference of the industry to the north-east coast. Before the War the industry employed some 16,000 men and women, but after the 140 hat-making firms have twice voluntarily cut their staffs, the number today is only 4,000, most of whom are women, or men over 50. But 4,000 skilled workers are worth a lot to Mr. Bevin; and, besides, Sir Thomas Barlow, Director-General of Civilian Clothing, is said to be keen on concentrating the clothing industries in certain parts of the country, of which Luton is not one. As soon as the rumour of the proposal got round, Luton rose as one man (and woman) in protest. Nor were the protesters mollified by the hint that the industry would come back to Luton after the War. Dr Leslie Burgin, Luton's M.P., led a deputation to the President of the Board of Trade on December 2; and the official statement issued after the meeting said that "there had been a misunderstanding of the real position," the Board of Trade "had not contemplated uprooting the hat industry from Luton. All that was intended was a wartime contraction, which would not injure Luton's position as a centre of the hat industry after the war."

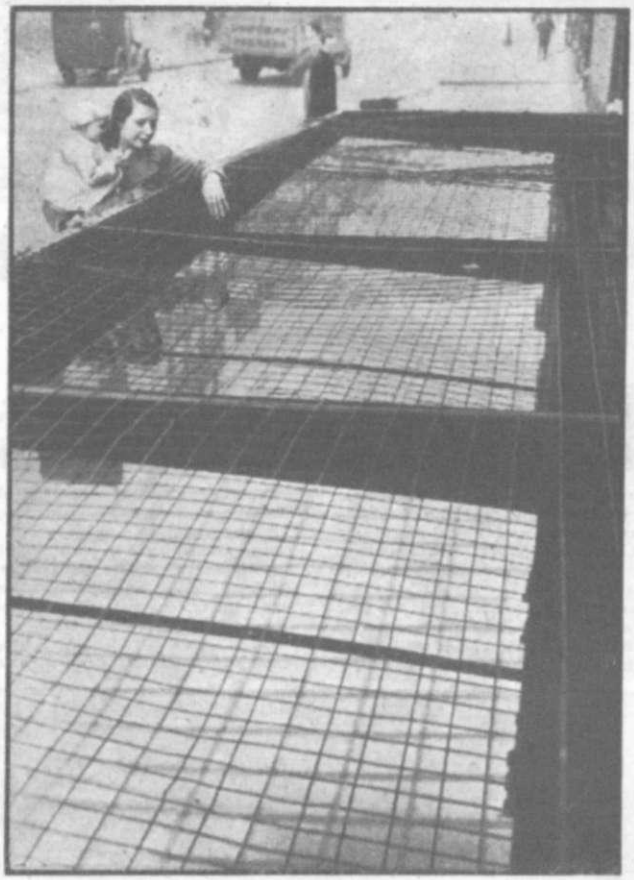
After Luton's day of excitement it was Worcester's turn. The local 600-year-old glove-making industry was to be moved, it was rumoured; and the civic fathers and the leaders of the industry roundly declared that they would fight any removal scheme. Then a similar tale came from Birmingham, where not gloves but perambulators were the threatened industry. Birmingham makes half the country's output of prams—an article whose importance has been recently recognized by the Board of Trade to the extent of raising the annual quota of production from 250,000 to 300,000 perambulators. After all, how can we expect the people to go in for babies if there are not enough prams to put them in? Again and yet again the Board of Trade emphasized the purity of their intentions. What, shift so old and important an industry from Worcester, from Birmingham? Nothing of the kind . . . "Mr. Dalton's young men at the Board of Trade are certainly learning something about industrial psychology," unkindly commented The Manchester Guardian.

WHILE the Beveridge Social Security proposals have provided many a meaty mouthful for the polemics of platform and press, it is good to know that our social progress has continued. If a list could be prepared of the social reforms that have been carried out since the War, said Mr. Ernest Brown on November 20, it would be seen to be a remarkable one. The Economist has compiled such a list:

In the social services aiming at preventing destitution, the rates for unemployment assistance and supplementary pensions have been raised, the test of personal need has been substituted for the household means test, and the machinery for paying supplementary pensions has been transferred from the public assistance authorities to the Assistance Board. The maximum for worker's compensation has been raised from 30s. to 35s. per week, and children's allowances have been added. In 1940 compulsory unemployment insurance, and at the beginning of 1942 National Health insurance, were extended to non-manual workers earning up to £420 a year instead of £250 as heretofore; and sickness and disablement benefit and unemployment benefit have been raised by 3s. and 2s. a week respectively; the pensionable age for wives of men covered by the contributory pensions scheme has been lowered from 65 to 60; and the pensionable age of all women insured in their own right has been lowered to 60. Among health reforms, specialist treatment has been made more easily available, a national rehabilitation and resettlement scheme for the disabled has been launched, and a national scheme for the care of the tuberculous has been adopted. A factory and welfare department has been established in the Ministry of Labour, and a beginning made with an industrial health service. Among the reforms associated with food policy are the provision of free or cheap milk to all nursing and expectant mothers and to children under five, and of free or cheap fruit juices and cod-liver oil to small children; the increase in the Exchequer grant for the milk in schools service and for the provision of school meals, and the extension of factory canteens. Children have also been granted priority in certain rationed foods, and war nurseries have been established.

But, as The Economist points out, many of the so-called reforms are really social necessities, dictated by wartime increases in the cost of living or by wartime shortage.

Some, e.g. factory canteens, are by no means nation-wide; and even today less than a quarter of the elementary school children in England and Wales have a dinner at school. Moreover, there is a very considerable debit in the shape of social evils: the break-up of families, due to evacuation and war service; the breakdown of education, which has not yet fully recovered from the disastrous effects of closed schools in the early part of the war; the growth in juvenile delinquency; the increase of certain diseases, such as tuberculosis and venereal disease; and the suspension of pre-war social reforms, such as shorter working hours—especially for children—holidays with pay, the raising of the school-leaving age, and the new Criminal Justice Bill.



STATIC WATER TANKS, since the blitz a feature of the wartime urban landscape, are now being fitted with strong wire mesh—so many have been the children drowned in them and so vast the accumulation of litter of every kind of which they have been made the receptacle. *Photo, Planet News*

VENEREAL disease provided the House of Commons with the subject for a remarkable debate on December 16. Dr. Edith Summerskill moved that an Address should be presented to his Majesty, praying the annulment of Regulation 33B (*see* page 410), on the ground that it was a third-rate measure.

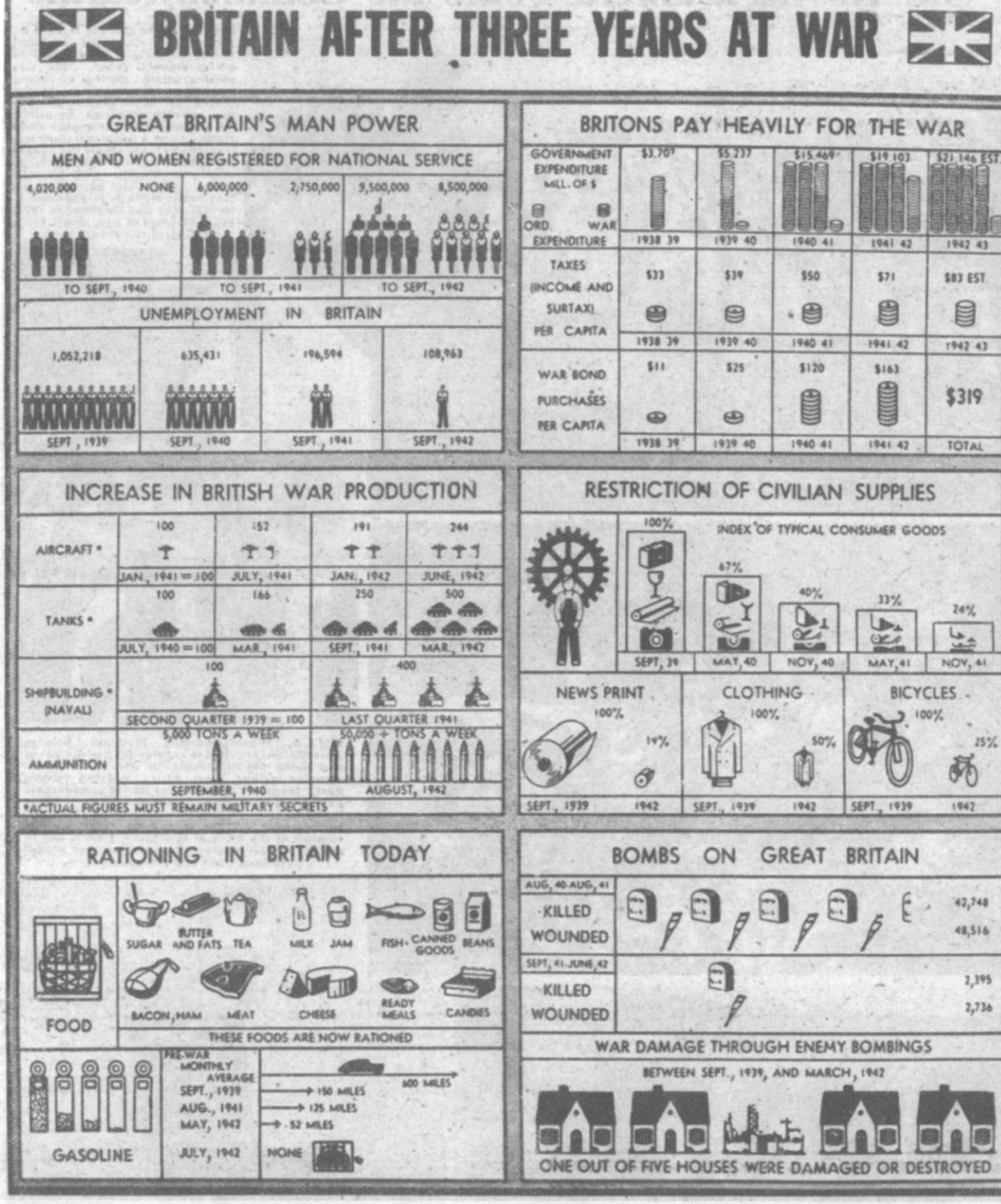
Yet it was designed to deal with an insidious disease more devastating to health and happiness than Hitler's bombs, one from which the casualties last year were greater than those during the blitz. "The Minister of Health has approached this problem like a Victorian spinster bred in a country parsonage and sheltered from the facts of life." Another woman Labour M.P., Mrs. Hardie, similarly described the Regulation as objectionable and useless, opening the way to the blackmailer, the informer, and the poison pen. Seeing that most of the victims are young men between 19 and 23 (she went on) it was clear that there was something very wrong with our educational system. Promiscuous immorality was due to the extension of drinking facilities—a view which Lady Astor hastened to support, while urging that the number of women police and doctors should be greatly increased

A FRESH note was struck by Mr. Boothby: not enough emphasis is being laid on prevention as against cure, he maintained.

In time of war it was not to be expected that promiscuity would be entirely stopped. "It is well known that prophylactics are to a large measure effective in preventing the spread of the disease. The time has come when preventive packets should, under proper regulation and safeguards, be available at proper chemists up and down the country." In his view compulsory notification and treatment were inevitable. Dr. Haden Guest supported the Regulation from his experience as medical officer on the staff of one of the Home Commands, and he pointed out that infection took place not only from professional prostitutes: he instanced two well-to-do women of 35 or so who had set up house near an R.A.F. aerodrome, entertaining the officers and infecting four or five of them. "They were not professionals, but women who wished to lead that kind of life."

Mr. Ernest Brown, replying to the debate, said that the Regulation was part of a planned programme embodying public education, adequate free treatment, and indirect action to discourage promiscuity. Dr. Summerskill's "prayer" was rejected by 245 votes to 31.

BRITAIN AFTER THREE YEARS AT WAR



"WE British need not apologize to anyone for our three years' part in the war," said the Home Secretary, Mr. Herbert Morrison, on October 30, in a speech to his constituents at Hackney. "We are mobilized for war. We have flung our man-power into the scale to the limit, and are now scouring the last corners for what little may remain. We are turning out war goods at a greater rate in proportion to our population than any country in the world, bar none. Our people, millions upon millions of them, are travelling during the black-out, working long hours, shivering more than a little at times, and yet going on their way serenely with no more than the minimum human amount of grousing and grumbling.

"Whatever glories future months and years may hold in store for this page of Britain's history, the tale of three years' war thus far inscribed upon it reveals a people united in the love of their native land and not afraid to dare the full, overwhelming might of tyranny, and today standing unconquerable in the strength of their honest and constructive purpose."

So that Britain's war effort shall be brought home to the people of America, the above chart has been prepared and is now being widely distributed throughout the United States.

In the caption to the diagram it is stated that: "These cold figures barely hint at the three years of fighting sacrifices which the British people have devoted to smashing the Axis. British income tax starts at an income of $440. The standard rate is 50 per cent; with surtax it rises to 97½ per cent. War Savings include nearly $200,000,000 which Britons have voluntarily lent their Government without interest. The growth of British war production has to be shown by percentages based on 100 rather than by actual figures which are secret. The chart shows only a few examples of the restrictions placed by law on the supply of consumer goods—and even the limited supplies permitted are not always available to the shoppers. Many foods not rationed are completely unobtainable. Thus the whole people contributes to victory."

Diagram by the Ministry of Information

Our Roving Camera Tours the Commonwealth

SIR O. A. PREMPEH II, K.B.E., Paramount Chief of Ashanti (West Africa), is seen below in his ceremonial robes. He was photographed during a recent inspection of the Ashanti Home Guard (left) at the capital, Kumasi. In a stirring broadcast, he called on his people to remember their traditions as a great warrior race. Inspired by his example the people of Ashanti have subscribed large sums to Spitfire and bomber funds. The Chief succeeded his late uncle, Nana E. A. Prempeh I, in 1931, and was knighted in 1937. He is 50 years of age, and is Hon. Lt.-Col. of the Home Guard.

E.N.S.A. (Entertainments National Service Association) provides a regular service of cinema and living entertainment in war zones as far apart as Iceland, West Africa, and the Middle East. Members of the Forces derive considerable enjoyment from these first-class "shows." Three E.N.S.A. girls are seen (left) during an afternoon performance on an improvised stage on the summit of the Rock of Gibraltar, 1,400 ft. above sea level. An appreciative audience of troops follows their every movement.

ASBESTOS FIRE-FIGHTING SUIT (left) worn by one of a party of naval ratings from a British warship in the tropics, who went ashore to practise the most modern methods of fire-fighting. They left their ship to avoid endangering the vessel. The contraption is an object of deep interest to the natives. A CANADIAN LAND GIRL (above) holding one of the great knives used for topping sugar beet, a crop which has done exceedingly well of late on the Canadian prairie.

Photos, British Official? Crown Copyright

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

They Were Jammed Like Sardines in Naples Harbour

Flying in a U.S. Liberator bomber at dusk on Dec. 4, 1942, Henry Gorrell, British United Press correspondent, helped to unload huge bombs on Naples harbour. The "bag" included an Italian cruiser sunk, a battleship and another cruiser crippled. His story of this devastating raid from North Africa is given below.

I SAW our small group of Liberators—only a small part of the whole force—drop thousands of pounds of bombs in the area of the Porta de Massa quay and the Angioino mole, covering about 700 square yards in the Naples dock area. In this area there were battleships, cruisers and destroyers. Every bomb hit something. I did not see a single ripple of water. They were all hits.

Flying at an altitude of several miles, in temperatures below zero, our bomb-aimers pin-pointed their targets. I saw one battleship hit dead in the centre and giving off a column of smoke that rose a couple of thousand feet into the air. There were also two large fires, one of which, with hundreds of fiery red particles flying in every direction, looked like Vesuvius in eruption.

And we were just the leading group of the attacking force. It will take some time to patch up the damage done to Naples harbour, which has been used as the main supply depot for the Axis forces defending Bizerta, Tunis and Tripoli.

THE Italian people have partly their fleet to blame for whatever death and destruction may have been caused by stray bombs in Naples. The Italian surface ships and submarines jammed like sardines in the harbour were one of our chief objectives. They hadn't come out for weeks, so the United States bombers went in and hit them in their hiding-places.

With well over 200 anti-aircraft guns, including several scores on the warships and on several anti-aircraft ships in the bay, the Italians were certainly in a position to defend themselves. Yet not one of our bombers was even holed.

The only previous raid by U.S.A. heavy bombers from North Africa to compare with this was a recent one on Tripoli, in which 90 per cent of the bombs dropped connected with shipping and harbour works. The U.S. Army Air Force here has pictures to prove it.

I flew in The Chief, commanded by Captain Lee C. Holloway, from Alabama. The huge bomber had been holed at least 75 times and had run into trouble on her last eight missions, but had always successfully delivered the goods.

The first few hours were uneventful. We flew low over the water through clouds, and there was a slight drizzle. Before we put on our oxygen masks I spotted a horseshoe hung up in the cabin and touched it for luck.

As the navigator clocked off the altitude, we got into fur-lined flying suits and adjusted our oxygen masks. Soon we were at an altitude that would kill a man in 15 minutes if he didn't have a mask on. One of our waist gunners had his eyelashes frozen together from the steam coming out of the top of his mask, and had to pull them apart. One bomber had to turn back because a waist gunner's mask had frozen and he couldn't breathe.

Now we are approaching the target, and coming lower. Suddenly I see Vesuvius far below, looking like an inverted ice-cream cone except for the trail of white vapour. I am on the alert, because the pilot says that if the bomb bay doors fail to open I am to push the hand lever.

The clouds disappear, and there is Naples below us, bordered with mountains and looking very sleepy. The pilot motions to me. Sure enough the bomb doors are stuck. I push a lever and a gust of freezing wind rushes in. My knees are knocking, and it seems to me a lifetime before the bombs drop.

I can see the Naples dock area thousands of feet below, but it is so cold I don't care whether it is Naples or Timbuctoo. I grit my teeth and hold on to the lever. At last the huge bombs, on which most of the boys have written their names and "The Season's Greetings," go down. I close the doors and shut out the cold.

Our bombs were answered by the flashes of A.A. guns and the red balls of flaming onions. Soon the plane seemed to be wading through the A.A. fire. The Italians, taken by surprise, "went crazy," firing pom-poms which could not reach higher than 6,000 or 7,000 feet. The shells exploded below the bomber, looking like lights on a Christmas tree. On the way back the island of Capri spat fire from heavy A.A. batteries.

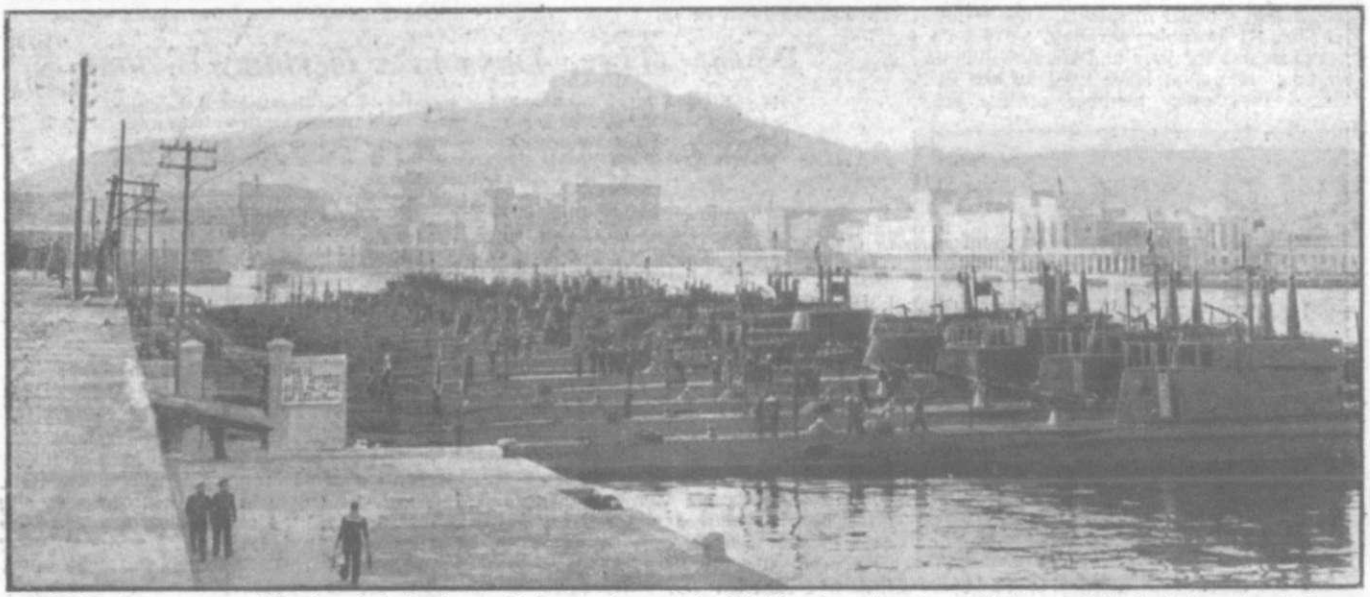
The crew of a U.S. Liberator inspect the bullet-riddled tail of their machine on returning to their N. African base from a raid over enemy-occupied territory.
Photo, Associated Press

We Rammed Oran's Boom to Land Our Troops

To facilitate the landing of Allied assault troops at Oran the concrete boom across the harbour entrance had to be smashed and defences immobilized. The part H.M.S. Hartland played in this perilous action on Nov. 8, 1942, is described by two of her officers in the Reuter story below.

H.M.S. HARTLAND hit the breakwater outside the harbour on the first run in, but afterwards passed through to her scheduled spot under a hail of machine-gun fire, with one boiler out of action and liable to blow up at any moment. Lieut. Hickson said the plan was to take the Hartland to the most easterly jetty, at the head of which they found a French flotilla leader and a French tug.

As it was difficult to get the Hartland between the two ships the captain gave orders to get a wire on to the tug. The Frenchmen seemed rather to resent this, but we got a wire across to her and started to disembark what was left of the boarding parties and troops,



NAPLES, the great port of Southern Italy, has been raided more than once by Allied bombers since the establishment of the Anglo-American bridgehead in North Africa. An account of one of these attacks is given in this page. This photo shows the harbour crammed with submarines lined up for a naval review when Mussolini still boasted of "our sea."
Photo, Associated Press

ALLIED ASSAULT FORCES AT ORAN on Nov. 8, 1942, encountered stiff resistance. Two ex-U.S. coastguard cutters, H.M.S. Hartland and H.M.S. Walney, broke into the harbour but were destroyed. Hartland's part in this great naval episode is told by two of her officers in this and the preceding page. Two days later Oran surrendered, when a U.S. infantry and tank column, covered by Adm. Cunningham's warships, entered the town. This photo shows a destroyer laying a smoke-screen round one of the transports during the landing operations. *Photo, British Official*

British and American, among whom a lot of casualties had been caused by machine-gun and battery fire.

By this time the ship was on fire fore and aft, one side of the bridge had gone and she was liable to blow up at any moment. Just as we started the slow job the captain said "abandon ship." Everyone had lifebelts, and one by one they went over the side. Once ashore they were taken prisoner.

Even before we went into the harbour Commander Billot had been wounded. He was on his hands and knees when he took the ship alongside. He was also blinded in one eye. He had his shoulder smashed and a machine-gun bullet in his leg. Nevertheless he said, "I am going through." When we got alongside the jetty and were abandoning ship he refused to leave until he was convinced that every member of the crew, both wounded and unwounded, was ashore.

Eventually he lowered himself over the side with his one sound arm and got into a rowing-boat with the idea of pulling out of the harbour and reaching a British ship outside, though he was obviously in need of medical attention. The French, however, picked him up in the harbour.

The attack was made just before 3 a.m. Lt. R. B. Bilborough, chief engineer of the Hartland, said:

Almost straightaway we were hit in the boiler-room. All the fire and repair parties were knocked out. A moment later at almost full speed we hit the concrete breakwater. There was little hope that anyone could be alive in the boiler-room.

The ship was on fire almost entirely fore and aft. There was no further hope of saving the ship. Some got away by swimming a quarter of a mile to a floating dock. At about 7.30 a.m. on Sunday the Hartland blew up.

From above, the attack presented other features. To quote Lt. Hickson again:

Machine-gun fire was opened. It was extremely inaccurate, and we thought it was token resistance. Afterwards we found we were wrong. The Hartland was repeatedly hit. We were caught by a searchlight and became an easy target. At the jetty, which was our objective, a flotilla leader opened fire at us at 50 feet. Every shell hit us.

Lt. V. A. Hickson (left) and Engineer Lt. R. Bilborough, whose description of H.M.S. Hartland's part in the action at Oran is given above. *Photo, Planet News*

I Spent Three Days in a German U-Boat

Mrs. Blanche Allen, her husband (a sergeant in the Hussars) and their six-year-old son Michael were sailing home from Durban when their ship was torpedoed. Their subsequent adventures, as told to Geoffrey Simpson, provide one of the strangest stories of the war; it is reprinted here from the Daily Mail.

I was changing into evening clothes for the ship's dance when the torpedo struck home. The ship lurched over, and we were ordered to our boat stations.

I climbed into a lifeboat in my thin evening dress, with Michael, while my husband went back for his Army greatcoat to keep the two of us warm. Our boat pushed off and we were all together. That was something—and we were glad of that coat later. There were 50 of us in the open boat, and it was bitterly cold. On the third day poor Michael was unconscious from exposure.

Then suddenly six German U-boats and an Italian submarine surfaced around us. One of the U-boats ordered us alongside. The commander was a tall, fair, good-looking man of about 35. He ordered his crew to distribute hot coffee, cigarettes, food and water to the men in the boats.

He spoke to us in excellent English. He said he would take the women and children aboard, but he regretted that he must leave the men to fend for themselves. I was terrified, but my husband insisted that I should go. I kissed him good-bye and entered the conning-tower.

The other women with me were Mrs. Davis, Miss Davison, Mrs. Atkins, Mrs. Sarnsum, and Mrs. Frain. There were two other children, aged eight and eleven.

It was stifling inside—a long oven-like corridor of winding pipes, wheels and dials. The U-boat captain went out of his way to reassure us. "I am deeply sorry you have been torpedoed, ladies," he said. "Please make yourselves comfortable, and be sure I will see you to safety."

They gave us coffee and biscuits, and chocolate for the children. Later they supplied

cooked meat and vegetables. Sailors gave up their bunks for us. I shared mine with another woman. We were too scared to be alone. In any case it was hard to sleep, because of the noise and the heat.

The crew played a radiogram for most of the day. They played the Blue Danube and Red Sails in the Sunset. The tunes made me think of home and my husband.

Then the captain came to see us again. He asked us if we would like to listen to the B.B.C. We said we would, and he switched on Bruce Belfrage reading the 9 o'clock news.

THE last day was dramatic. The crew suddenly became tense and strained. We were diving. An American bomber, they said, had sighted us. Everything was very quiet now, but then came two distinct crumps of falling bombs or depth charges. It shook all of us, and I was glad Michael was sound asleep. We remained submerged for two hours—two of the most anxious hours I have ever spent.

One of the crew—they called him Hans—played a lot with Michael. He produced a photograph of his own little boy—and I knew why. Others in the crew showed us pictures of their wives and families.

Some hours after the bombing attack we cruised up to a Vichy destroyer and I and the other women and children were transferred. The U-boat captain, still a model of courtesy, again apologized for the inconvenience caused us, and wished us a safe return.

A day later we were put aboard a Vichy cruiser. We were well treated aboard her, too. We sailed in the cruiser for a week, eating well and having comfortable quarters. She took us finally to Casablanca.

There we were transferred again—this time to an internment camp under Vichy guards. Oh, what a difference! By comparison with our treatment in the U-boat and the French warships we were badly dealt with by those people. For two months we were on semi-starvation rations. These consisted chiefly of watery lentil soup and eggs. Yes—eggs and eggs and eggs, until we felt that our stomachs would revolt at the sight of them.

How glad we were when the Americans came to North Africa. The guards came and told us. They had the impudence to say, "Tell the Americans when they arrive that we looked after you properly."

My relatives tell me I have lost weight as a result of my experiences, but that does not trouble me. All that I am anxious for now is news from my husband. My last sight of him was of a waving figure in an open boat while I stood on the deck of a German submarine. The ending is a happy one, for Mrs. Allen has now been rejoined in England by her husband. He had been picked up by a French cruiser and taken to Morocco.—Ed.

RELEASED FROM INTERNMENT, this happy group of British women and children, victims of U-boats and taken as captives to Morocco, were photographed at Gibraltar on their way home. Mrs. Blanche Allen, whose adventures are described in this page, is seen with her little boy, second from the left. *Photo, British Official*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

DEC. 9, 1942, Wednesday *1,194th day*

Air.—Turin again raided by strong force of bombers.

North Africa.—Docks at La Goulette and Tunis airfield raided by Allied aircraft.

Russian Front.—Germans counter-attacked round Stalingrad and Rzhev, but failed to hold their ground.

DEC. 10, Thursday *1,195th day*

North Africa.—Enemy tank and infantry attacks in direction of Mejez-el-Bab beaten back; Tunis docks bombed.

Libya.—Allied aircraft attacked Marble Arch landing ground, W. of El Agheila.

India.—Jap bombers and fighters raided Chittagong, Bengal.

Australasia.—Announced that Allied forces had completely occupied Gona area of New Guinea.

DEC. 11, Friday *1,196th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss of minesweeper H.M.S. Cromer; Greek submarine Triton also lost.

Air.—Turin again raided by R.A.F.

N. Africa.—Our forces in Tunisia beat off two enemy tank and infantry attacks.

Libya.—Nofilia landing-ground, W. of El Agheila, attacked by our aircraft.

Mediterranean.—Naples raided by U.S. aircraft by day and by R.A.F. at night; Palermo docks also bombed.

Russian Front.—German counter-attacks between Don and Volga thrown back.

Indian Ocean.—American bombers renewed their attacks on Rangoon docks and on Port Blair, Andaman Is.

Australasia.—U.S. dive-bombers hit five out of 11 Jap destroyers heading for Guadalcanal.

U.S.A.—U.S. bombers attacked Jap shipping at Kiska, Aleutians.

DEC. 12, Saturday *1,197th day*

Sea.—U.S. Navy Dept. announced sinking by mine of liner President Coolidge, transport in S. Pacific.

Air.—American bombers and Allied fighters attacked Rouen; 23 enemy fighters destroyed.

N. Africa.—Enemy attempts to infiltrate N. and S. of Mejez-el-Bab stopped. Tunis docks bombed by U.S. Fortresses.

Libya.—Our forward troops continued to probe enemy defences before El Agheila. Tripoli raided by our bombers.

Mediterranean.—Palermo harbour raided by Allied bombers.

Burma.—Blenheim bombers attacked Mandalay.

Australasia.—U.S. warships engaged Jap destroyers heading for Guadalcanal and sank or damaged three.

Home Front.—Sharp raid on N.E. coastal area.

General.—German prisoners in Britain and Canada unshackled following Swiss Govt.'s appeal to Britain and Germany.

DEC. 13, Sunday *1,198th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss of destroyer Penylan and trawler Jasper.

N. Africa.—Heavy U.S. bombers attacked docks at Bizerta and Tunis by day; R.A.F. raided Tunis and La Goulette at night.

Libya.—Eighth Army turned Rommel out of his strong positions at Mersa Brega, E. of El Agheila.

Russian Front.—S.W. of Stalingrad strong German attack beaten off.

Burma.—R.A.F. Wellingtons bombed aerodrome at Magwe.

Australasia.—In New Guinea Japs began fresh landing operations at Mambare, between Gona and Lae, under heavy Allied air attack.

DEC. 14, Monday *1,199th day*

N. Africa.—Eight raids by Allied bombers on docks at Tunis and Bizerta on Dec. 13-14.

Mediterranean.—Heavy bombers from Libya raided Naples.

Russian Front.—At cost of heavy losses Germans made wedge in Soviet lines in Kotelnikovo area S.W. of Stalingrad.

Australasia.—American troops in New Guinea captured Buna village.

General.—Agreed that Madagascar to be administered by Fighting French under Gen. Legentilhomme.

DEC. 15, Tuesday *1,200th day*

N. Africa.—Allied bombers raided Sfax, Susa, Bizerta, Tunis, and La Goulette.

Libya.—Eighth Army, hindered by mines, continued pursuit of Axis forces W. of El Agheila.

Russian Front.—German advance halted S.W. of Stalingrad.

India.—Two Japanese raids on Chittagong.

DEC. 16, Wednesday *1,201st day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss of H.M. submarine Unbeaten.

N. Africa.—In Tunisia Allied bombers and fighters attacked enemy troops and railway near Mateur.

Libya.—Our advanced forces reached Wadi Matratin and cut off portion of Rommel's rearguard.

Australasia.—U.S. dive-bombers attacked Jap shipping off New Georgia Is.

Home Front.—Single enemy aircraft attacked towns and villages in S. and S.E. England; two raiders shot down.

DEC. 17, Thursday *1,202nd day*

Air.—R.A.F. bombers raided N.W. Germany in bad weather; 18 aircraft lost.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops continued to make progress on Stalingrad and Central fronts.

Burma.—British troops advanced about 30 m. into Burma and occupied territory N.W. of Akyab without opposition.

U.S.A.—Liberator bombers attacked Jap bases on Kiska, Aleutians.

DEC. 18, Friday *1,203rd day*

N. Africa.—Allied bombers attacked docks at Bizerta, Tunis and La Goulette.

Libya—Axis forces evacuated Nofilia.

Burma.—R.A.F. bombers raided Akyab.

Australasia.—U.S. bombers raided Jap base at Munda, New Georgia.

DEC. 19, Saturday *1,204th day*

N. Africa.—French troops in Tunis occupied Pichon, W. of Kairouan.

Libya.—Allied aircraft attacked enemy transport columns at Buerat, W. of Sirte.

Russian Front.—Announced that Russian troops had launched fresh offensive in Middle Don area, recapturing 200 places.

Burma.—Allied bombers raided aerodrome at Toungoo.

Australasia.—U.S. dive-bombers and Fortresses again attacked Jap base at Munda, New Georgia.

DEC. 20, Sunday *1,205th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss of H.M. trawler Ullswater.

Air.—U.S. Liberator and Fortress bombers made daylight raid on aircraft repair works at Romilly-sur-Seine; 44 enemy fighters shot down; six U.S. bombers lost. R.A.F. raided Duisburg by night.

Libya.—Our forward patrols in touch with enemy round Sultan, 30 m. E. of Sirte.

Russian Front.—Russians made further progress in new advance on Middle Don.

India.—Enemy aircraft made first raid on Calcutta area. Chittagong also bombed.

Indian Ocean.—British naval force made heavy air attack on Sabang, Sumatra.

Burma.—Allied bombers raided Rangoon and Magwe.

Australasia.—After heavy fighting in New Guinea U.S. and Australian troops captured Cape Endaiadere, S.E. of Buna.

★ Flash-backs ★

1939

December 13. *Battle of River Plate between Graf Spee and Exeter, Ajax and Achilles.*

December 17. *Graf Spee scuttled outside Montevideo.*

1940

December 9. *Wavell's offensive opened against Italians in Western Desert.*

December 16. *British occupied Sollum and Fort Capuzzo.*

1941

December 9. *Japanese landed in Luzon, Philippines.*

December 10. *Prince of Wales and Repulse sunk off Malaya. Japanese captured Kota Bahru aerodrome, Malaya.*

December 11. *Germany and Italy declared war on U.S.A.*

December 15. *Russian offensive continued; Kalinin recaptured.*

December 19. *Derna occupied by Eighth Army under Gen. Ritchie.*

Editor's Postscript

THERE are times in this fourth winter of black-out when "I am aweary, aweary," but never one when I go the whole way with Mariana of the moated Grange, and "would that I were dead!" Never. Life at its longest is so brief a business, especially when you contemplate the millions of years that had passed before you were conscious of living and the possibility that you will be quite a long time dead, that I think we ought to regard every hour of it as precious. That is why I am inclined to resent the feeling of weariness that descends upon me when the black-out blackens and the sleepy feeling, induced by no sunshine, that comes upon me too often. Thinking that advancing years might not unreasonably account for this, I have discussed it with many persons of all adult ages and find, to my solace, if not to my encouragement, that it is the common experience of those who are twenty or thirty years my juniors. Surely those who order our way of life ought to realize this by easing their restrictions wherever that can be done with safety and without hurt to our war effort; for a lively and good-tempered public is in itself an essential to waging a total war. Yet there are those among our bureaucrats who take a fierce, sadistic joy in making loyal and well-meaning citizens miserable by unsympathetic consideration of cases of hardship resulting from the blind, mechanical application of a general rule to differently conditioned individuals.

IT is hardly necessary to detail any of these, as every living Briton has suffered from the form-filling mania that is common to every department of our bloated bureaucracy, and must have discovered by now that the real purpose of many of the forms we are asked to fill up is not to help us in any way to a fair share of obtainable necessities so much as to disgust us with the plaguy process of acquiring our due. We then decide to do without it, even to the point of lessening our individual ability to help in the national effort. This very common sense of frustration is, I suspect, not unconnected with the weary feeling I have mentioned, which might be counteracted in some degree at least by a more general recognition from officialdom that those swanking around, clothed in a little authority, are not really a different class of human beings equipped to make the lives of another class, the burden bearers, needlessly hard and gloomy, but that they are creatures "of like passions" whose function ought to be one of helpfulness to their fellows. It would have been jolly if some of these restrictive departments had made a New Year's resolution to be helpful in 1943 rather than harassing to the ordinary decent folk whose labour is paying their wages. I think I hear someone say wearily, "You have a hope!" Still, the right time for a hopeful heart to beat a little stronger is at the beginning of a new year. I am even finding a crumb of comfort in the minutely lengthening daylight which in another three months will banish once again those black-out blues!

DISCUSSING with a friend of his the other day, a journalist who long since laid down his pen and passed into the shadows, I recalled that on one occasion during the last War when he had some part in my own activities, we were together at an entertainment in a certain well-known London club one Saturday evening, when my old friend Lyle Johnstone contributed a new song entitled "Never Again with the Likes o' These." Personally, I found its sentiments entirely acceptable and it was set to a rollicking tune which ought to have given it a greater vogue than I think it ever attained. "These" were naturally the Huns of 1914, but my journalistic friend, who went through life enunciating a sort of mushy idealism and just fell short of being a pacifist, was so indignant at the vigorous anti-German feeling of the song that he endeavoured to leave the room in protest, and would no doubt have done so had it not been the custom then in that particular coterie to have the door locked out of respect for the vocalists, so that they should not suffer from members barging in in the middle of their efforts. But probably this was the only time that the locked door stood in the way of a sentimental soul whose kindly feelings for all mankind made him uneasy at the prospect of our never again grasping the hand of the Hun in fellowship. I have thought of him in noticing that a Never Again Society has recently been formed in England, and I wonder if they know of the existence of the composition in question, which might serve them as a theme song. At any rate, I can commend it to their attention, as I believed in it then and more strongly approve its sentiment today.

FAMOUS FIGHTERS OF THE R.A.F

WING CMDR. D. R. S. BADER, D.S.O., D.F.C., renowned "legless" pilot. He was taken prisoner on Aug. 9, 1941, after having brought down 22½ German planes (the last being shared) in the Battle of Britain of 1940, and in daylight sweeps over N. France, 1940-41.
Drawn by Eric Kennington: Crown Copyright reserved

AS one who has always taken a keen amateur interest in astronomy I have noted with some surprise the announcement that a new planet, sixteen times larger than Jupiter, was discovered at the end of November 1942 by a Swedish astronomer named Dr. Strand, who calculates that the object of his discovery must have a weight of some 5,000 times that of the Earth. This will give one a faint idea of the amount of space still available outside the tiny Solar System in which this Earth of ours has a very minor position. For Jupiter is the largest of the planetary masses that have their orbits round the Sun, which in its turn is one of the smaller of the millions of suns burning within the immeasurable vastness of space. Jupiter is 1,312 times larger than the Earth and is attended by no fewer than nine moons, while we are struggling along with one, but the density of Jupiter is much lower than that of our planet, so that its weight is not relatively greater than that of the Earth.

THAT an unknown planet 18,000 times bulkier than the Earth has evaded the ceaseless investigations of astronomers from Galileo to Sir James Jeans would be a bit of real news if we were not so occupied with the War that is raging on our own pumpkin of a planet at present. Meanwhile, I have my doubts about it, though I had none concerning the last authentic discovery of another planet in the Solar System, since Pluto (as it was christened) has a diameter only half our own. There would be at least one consolation if Earth were as enormous as Jupiter: a World War on it would be impossible, as a century might go by before the news that its northern inhabitants were exterminating each other had reached as far south as its Australia!

OUR friends down south, especially the Diggers who write to me, must be a breezy lot. One of the raciest letters I have had of late, the spelling of which would have done credit to Josh Billings or Artemus Ward, comes from farther south, Tasmania, and tells me that the writer has been reading THE WAR ILLUSTRATED since it began and is so pleased with it that he urges me to keep it going "War or no War." Personally, I think that we shall all be fairly fed up with the War, as a war, by the time it is ended, but as a period of great adventure and marvellous events it will yield material for thousands of publications in the years to follow. I like this correspondent particularly because he is so frank about my own gossip, which he tells me is sometimes "very tame" and occasionally "just mush." But some of the things which he, as an old soldier (his name, by the way, is Patman, and he writes from Moonah, Tasmania), says about our Blimps I would not dare to quote. Evidently my own particular bête noire of the B.B.C., those dreadful boomings of Big Ben at nine o'clock, have a value more appreciable in the far reaches of the British Commonwealth than in the British Isles, for this cheery critic finishes up his letter by saying that "all is well, as I have just heard Big Ben striking . . . and now we will hear some of the Colonel Blimps from the B.B.C. studio, which is full of them."

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